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Ah, but they knew each other.

Bayo began paddling faster to keep up with him.

"There is to be a council meeting at Gankwe. I had to hurry away last night, and I must get back there in time. We must have permission from the spirit of the dead man to go back to work, and Sedefo has to find out if he can start up the river, and if he does go, we must all pray to the ancestors because four men will be going from Gankwe, and the *Gran Sembe*—the village elders—have things to decide . . . "

Now, fearing that he might have said too much, he doubled his speed, and Bayo understood that the other preferred to be alone. They belonged to different clans, Bayo to the same as the headman of the tribe, and the Gankwe people to another. Gankwe was sending important men to take the Bakra up the river. The chief's own brother, Asikanu, was to go, although it was said he was being sent out of the way while his adultery case was being settled. There had been talk about this case up and down the river. The Gankwe clan head had given a chief's sanctuary to the offender because he was his own brother, people said. Well, if the injured husband committed suicide as he threatened, and sent a kunu to the family of the brother, and even the village and clan, it would be an ugly thing. But so it was with trouble about women. It was as they said,

"Sleep is death
Woman kills man."

He half chanted the proverb and smiled, for he looked forward to his trip up the river with an eye to a visit in Lamé, where the women knew how to love. And he began singing the seketi song which he liked so well. Both the melody and the words were old, but he sang the refrain as if it were quite his own—whatever hardships there were on the river, at Lamé one slept with the women!

At the village of Akunkun an old man and a boy of about nine were at the landing place ready to start. Bayo

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recognised the coat of a village chief, and by the size of the boat he knew that it belonged to the upper river, far, far beyond the stretches he had yet penetrated.

He spoke the greeting in the faintest of whispers, out of deference to a man of age and rank, and stopped his boat, for this village belonged to his own clan, and it was here that he would get from his mother's sister the cassava bread which she had got ready for his journey up river. He got out of his boat gently; decorum demanded that he subdue his energy before the man of position. His palms rested on his knees for an instant, as he stood slightly inclined before the older man, and what questions he answered, he did in speech which was punctuated with the ceremonial stammering demanded by the occasion. He had put his toga-like cloth over him and stood hesitating whether or not to take his paddle to the village with him, for he was so well known here that this settlement was almost as familiar to him as his own. But at last he leaned down and took up his paddle. This mature formality, in a village where he was still often looked upon as a boy, was prompted perhaps by this meeting with the chief, or by the new feeling of confidence he had, since he was taking the Bakra's boat up the river. But here he was, going up the embankment with the firm, slow step of the stranger.

The old chief had already started, having first made his sacrifice of rum to the spirit of his boat by squirting it over the finely carved head which appeared in relief on the prow. And now, as he guided his canoe with the sure strokes of his large steering paddle, he sang his prayer.

"*Kediamo, Kediampon,*
Mother of the River,
Sacred ancestors, and my a'ka,
I am taking this journey down the river,
I am going to the city,
Grant that I travel in safety,
Grant that the trip be joyous,
Grant that I meet with friends,

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ON THE SARAMACCA RIVER

Grant that I walk with strangers in friendship,
Grant that the white man deal fairly with me.
Great Sky God,
Mother of the River,
Sacred ancestors,
I thank you."

Before the sound of the old chief's voice had died away, Bayo was on the bank again with the great disks of cassava bread in his arms. He covered them carefully and was on his way. His aunt had provided nicely for him. She had given him a large bottle of palm oil as well, and now, if he could but shoot a monkey or a macaw while going up the river, he would have excellent food. The Bakra would be certain to have a drink or two for his paddlers, and some leaf tobacco; and, though he himself was not old enough to snuff tobacco, he would save it for a gift to the father of his betrothed.

He went back to his seketi.

"Mo, a Lamé
A sib' ko' de muye."

On the bank of the next village several women were at work washing clothes. Were they young? Ah, but he must hurry. Twice he had been overtaken.

"Tia, odi! tia, odi! tia, odi!" He spoke to each of the three women separately and finished his "Adiosi" with an extra flourish, for he knew as he paddled away that the circle of cicatrized kamemba and the snake incised in the small of his back below it would gleam in the sun and look alive to the women who watched him make off.

That Lamé obia was a powerful thing!

3

At Gankwe they had been up all night, for yesterday was the eighth day after death, and that night the ceremony of B'oko Dei had to be cared for—until night met day, the villagers said, there would be Anansi stories, and then, after the dawn, the elders would hold council, for one's

other bank, and now as we reached the opposite shore, we saw the small opening of a minor channel which we were to take. With astonishing nicety the tip of the juncture of the main stream and this smaller channel was reached at the same instant. Loin cloths were adjusted, and once more the pole-men took up their pole-sticks and continued the slow passage against the current.

The boats were now again traveling close to the bank, so that the details of the forest which fringed the river could be clearly seen. Straight from the water rose the wall of sheer green, all of a dark, almost dull purplish color—a wall of fifty, a hundred, a hundred and fifty feet and more, as the lianas dropped down from the upper branches of the great trees which gave these parasitic growths their support. Here and there we saw a brilliant wing of a bird, and a Bush Negro, ever ready to augment his meager food supply, would unlimber an ancient shotgun, steady himself, and shoot. In Sedefo's canoe, Angita, his pole-man, saw a blue and golden macaw silhouetted as it sat on a slender branch. Out came the shotgun. The macaw, startled but unhit, flew to another branch farther upstream. We crept slowly, noiselessly ahead, and when we were close by Angita shot again, and missed again. The macaw now did not trouble to fly away, and when Angita made aim once more, Sedefo stopped him.

"No, mati—Let him be, friend. The gods are protecting him. Put away your gun."

Again we cut across, as we regained the wide channel, this time so that the men might speak their errand to the spirit of their great ancestor, the god of the large creek. We did not go too close, however, and all we could see was an azang again, the spiritual guard of palm fronds, and beyond the whitened trunk of a tree and a slender stick with a bit of white cotton attached to its end.

Sedefo spoke conversationally. "*Aso*—ancestor—we are going up the river. We are working for the American Bak'a. We are on our way to the G'ama's country. Grant

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that we walk the Bak'a with pleasure, that he treat us well, that we walk in safety. Thank you."

The men in the other canoes, who had gathered about Sedefo's boat, clapped their hands, as Sedefo had done, and said "Thank you," then took up their paddles.

We had noticed that when Sedefo spoke, Bibifo's lips had moved, as though he were either repeating the prayer, or speaking his own, but when the others joined in the voiced "Gran' tangi!" he was silent.

"Did you pray, Bayo?" we asked. Yes, he had. He had prayed for us, too. Did Bibifo also pray for the white man? But before Bibifo could answer, Bayo laughed aloud.

"Bibifo is *kerki sumo*—a church man. Call him Adrian, it will please him. I call him Bibifo, nothing else."

"And you, Bayo?"

"I—you will take me with you to Africa. I want to learn African obia, and come back to the Saramacca, and be a big obia man here on the river."

5

Old Bibifo accepted his great-grandson's jibes with good humor. We were sorry for the old fellow who was so little at ease with the other men, and was so mercilessly twitted by the youngster in the bow.

If the old man were to make a suggestion to him about a channel which Bayo had decided against, then he would turn brazenly, and exclaim, "Massa cow!" This is part of the proverb which says that a man who owns the cow has the best right to say where it shall graze. If Bibifo objected when Bayo attempted to do something that seemed impossible, he would face about smilingly and say, "The power which has raised the monkey from the ground and taught it to live safely in the trees is not dead yet."

"Bibifo," we said, making conversation with the old man, "Why do we go close to the shore?"

"In the center the current is swift and the river deep. When we go in the center, then we use only paddles. It is

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Chapter IV

KUNU

I

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822 EVENTS on the river, as it turned out, showed Sedefo's fears of the large boat that rolled, and of his kunu, only too well grounded. It was to him that there occurred the only mishaps of the entire up-river journey. That what happened proved to be no more serious was, according to the general understanding of our men, to be credited to that personal boat of Sedefo's, whose spirit he had tried on many journeys, and had propitiated with offerings of sacred rum and prayer.

It was also whispered among our men that the Bakra's magic from Africa—a wholly imaginary thing, but which explained to the Bush Negroes our ability to do or withstand things that were not expected of us—had something to do with it, too. For kunu was kunu, and the one in Sedefo's family had shown its hand but too many times of late. Had not the family lost another man only a few months earlier? Had not Zimbi just been buried? And Zimbi's wife, dead less than a year before.

Thanks, then, to his boat, Sedefo's life had been spared. It was not for nothing that he had taken every care when making this boat, that before he had felled the log out of which he had made it, he had addressed himself to the spirit of the tree, explaining that he had need
● [182] of its wood for a boat, that he would therefore cut it down. He had rendered his thanks for the spirit's permission, as

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was needful, and since then he had often made prayer to his boat, and the boat had carried him safely.

But this is what happened.

On our fourth day up the river we were on our way early, because the men said the falls ahead were difficult, and they wanted to be through them before they stopped to eat. It took us more than an hour to pass the rapids, for the land rose higher and higher, and the water cascaded from one ledge to the next, often in curving channels of swift water that were too deep to allow the use of pole-sticks, and too swift for the paddles to cope with. [133]

There were also those stretches which were without the piled rocks to give the men a footing for pulling the boats over, so that a rope had to be used, and the going was slow and treacherous. Each of the dugouts had this long rope fastened to its prow, and ahead, on the first ledge, were two or more of the men, the other end of the rope in hand, waiting for the signal to start hauling, while holding on to the sides of the boat as they swam were as many men as could be spared, so that if the rope broke, the boat would not be swept downstream, to go crashing against the rocks. These men who faced the fast water of their river, worked as though at the sight of it their Kromanti fighting spirit had entered their bodies, as if not men were there, but an impersonal force pitting itself against the force of the river. Even where the water was not too deep, and they could haul the boat, care could not be slackened for an instant—a wrong turn, and the boat would be capsized, or, what would be as serious, the impact of a rock might cut a gash in its side or bottom, filling it with water faster than they could manage to bring it to a bank. But at last the sound of the falling water was behind us, and the men, once they were in the still water again, went on with the casualness that they fell into with their river when the danger was over, and cast about for a pleasant place to stop and eat.

All at once there was a shout from behind us. Each boat echoed it shrilly. What's that? Whose boat?

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around, give a strong thrust with the pole-stick, and the canoe was through—a bit of child's play.

We were soon again to see Sedefo's kunu strike. This time it was almost at dusk. The men, it appeared, would not be able to make the village we had planned on for the night. In half an hour it would be dark, and here we were fully two hours' fast traveling from our intended destination. Overhead clouds were coming up from the east. The sky was rapidly becoming overcast. Rain—and everywhere the impenetrable wall of green, rising dark and forbidding. To make camp where we were would have taken at least two hours, and it was growing darker and darker. The men refused to clear the underbrush in the dark.

It seemed, however, that five minutes upstream on the opposite bank and only a little to the south of where we had stopped to talk things over was a village, the name of which when we heard it we recognized as one of the two we had been asked not to visit. There was nothing to do but to brave the displeasure of the Granman and stop there; so turning we headed our boats toward the opposite shore.

In midstream a great wind came up, a wind that in suddenness and force is only met in the tropics. The men shrieked and shouted and struggled until our boats reached shore. But Sedefo's boat, which was the second, seemed to be lifted bodily out of the water. We could see a black mass being heaved up . . . the black tarpaulin was overboard going downstream, and Sedefo after it.

The wind subsided as quickly as it had sprung up, and when Sedefo came back sometime later, he carried the dripping tarpaulin on his head. He did not drink the rum we gave to warm him, but poured it over his hands and his boat as an offering.

The next day we talked with Bayo about kunu.

"Why is it, Bayo, that Sedefo lost his food in the still water? Was it because he felt safe and didn't take care in such small rapids?"

"No," he said promptly, "that's how kunu works. A man travels on the river all his life. He goes over small

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688 Marowyne to earn money that he needed for marrying. He was in good health, and he learned about the river "*so te*—until . . . " he knew how to travel on the river safely. But after he had been away only a short time, word came to Kasanya's village that he was ill, and before he could be brought home, he died. They brought back his hair and nail clippings so that his spirit might rest among [769] his own people. They held a big *dede wosu*—wake—for him for six days in the village, with the little coffin and the offerings which were to accompany the spirit, and dancing and Anansi stories and the adji game, just as though he had died at home. There were many guns, too. Everything was done, and the spirit of the dead son was asked to help the family against the kunu which was brought to them by the deed of his mother's mother's brother.

The second son died in the bush. His own gun went off accidentally as he tripped on a hidden liana and killed him, [789] though Kasanya had provided him with all the hunting [229] obias a man would want, and he himself had a strong Kromanti spirit, so that no gun was supposed to have power to hurt him. The third was married when he died. His boat went over in the rapids. His body was never recovered.

787 "Tomorrow we shall all go and pray to the Mother of the River that she carry us well, that our journey be pleasant, that we reach the Granman's village safely. . . . There across the river is her shrine."

3

761 It soon became clear that two things dominate the fore-796 ground of the spiritual life of the bush—death and kunu. In 688 the last analysis, however, the two are perhaps but one force, for kunu slowly, inexorably, brings death to one member after another of the offender's kin, and it is largely the dead ancestors and the gods who are responsible for the meting out of kunu, in order that the ancient traditions and beliefs may go on. And so it was that daily, and many times daily, incidents not of our special seeking arose to document our knowledge of kunu.

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if it was smaller still it would plague the members of the family with sickness, or bad luck, or it might make them poor and send all kinds of trouble to them.

"Kunu," he went on, "attacks the family of the offender, but almost never the person who has done the evil thing himself. That would be too easy. If I wanted very much to do something I should not do, then I might be willing to take death in the end. But to punish my whole family until it is ended—that is too much."

"But what is kunu?" we asked.

"Kunu is a spirit. We dance to it and serve it with offerings. It is not the same in every village, but in our village we dance kunu in this way. If we dance it during the next moon, then we dance one day only, and two months later we dance kunu again. Then we wait eleven months and dance again. We do this every year in the same way."

"Is this enough to keep kunu away? Would it not be better to dance more often?"

"It would do no good at all to dance kunu more often. The spirits would only be angry if they were disturbed all the time. If you have kunu, you have it," we heard again.

But why, we asked, were not people careful? Why, if they knew that kunu was hard, did they not walk more softly still, so that they might avoid this trouble?

"Ma, kye! There are always things happening, people always do things they shouldn't."

"Then life is hard for you Saramacca people," we said. "You must always think of kunu."

Our seriousness amused him. It was, after all, this way with kunu. When you had it, you did what you could. If a wrong was done, then it had to be paid for. But the Bakra should not think that the Saramacca people weren't happy. There were good spirits, too. While some spirits punish, others protect.

"Have you seen our women dance, Bakra? A Saramacca woman's foot can do things, mati. Have you seen them dance bandamba? Have you seen them *chaka*—shake?" he said, laughing, and turning to the men about him, he added, "We will show them how our women dance—and our men!"

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Chapter V

THE SHRINE TO THE RIVER GODS

I

ON THE narrow strip of land below the Mamadam, our hammocks were slung between trees whose trunks leaned well over the water, so that once we stretched out on the canvas, it was like swinging over an abyss to the rhythm of water wearing down rock.

At one time the shrine to the gods had stood on this clearing, but boats had gone aground in the falls, and rafts which needed but little urging when the spirits were friendly were swung about in the current and lost to their kingdom at the river bottom. Even now a great log lay wedged in between rocks in the middle of the stream. The water had worn grooves into its hard surface, yet there it was, held fast against the timeless flaying of the falls.

Nor was that all. One year when the time for the new rains came, the rain did not fall. In the villages the priests climbed the ladders within the sacred enclosures and from on high poured out libations to the ancestors, beseeching them to intercede in behalf of the living. Those who had river spirits went to the waterside when the moon was dead to dance to the gods. But the drums gave back a dull sound, and the dancing was listless. Those who plunged into the river to swim against the rapids while the drums intoned the exhortations did not remain under water long, and when they came up they uttered no oracles. Many who were known to be possessed by powerful spirits paced back

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and forth on the sandy bank to the rhythm of the voicees in the drums, but their gods would not come. They could not dance, they could not find peace while the drums spoke, and so this disconsolate pacing went on week after week, on those days when the river gods might be danced to. Sometimes the pulse of the drumming, quickening for an interval, stirred the dancers. A shudder would go through the body of one or another and the dry throats would fall to uttering the sacred cries, but almost the next instant the hand of the drummer would go limp, and once more the listless, agonized pacing would continue. The gods were angered. When the drums called them from the river bottom, they came grudgingly and remained sullen, refusing to make their wishes known, and no gods or ancestors came to counsel the wise men in their sleep how to bend the will of the spirits of the river.

In the fields the parched earth baked in the merciless heat until it was like whitened bone. The few plants that had pushed their way up through the sandy soil were now brown dust which any wind might scatter. But there was no wind. No rain, no wind, for in the river the god of the wind dwells, and in the sky the rain god, and these gods are twins, and twins have but one soul, since it is with the gods as it is with humans.

No rain, no wind. Famine was upon the land.

At last, at the village of Opoku a woman had a dream. She was a pure albino, one of the type who, together with those who show by the slight turn of red in their wooly hair a strain of albinism, are called Toné people, and are identified with the river gods. To this Toné woman the gods came in sleep, and spoke their will.

"And what was it you gave to the gods?" we asked Sedefo, who had fallen silent at this point in his story.

"Mati," he said, after a pause, "I am not an important man. You ask what I may not tell. My mouth cannot take upon itself to speak what concerns our big men."

This much he would say. A boat filled with things had been sent down the river. Men standing at the river bank

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had seen a hand reach out for the boat, had seen it vanish out of sight. The gods had accepted the offerings. That year the Granman from the city, the white Granman, had to send rice from a far country to feed them, but the next year the crops were good, and all had been well since that time.

"And was that when this shrine was removed to the other island?"

"*M'an sabi. A kan de*—I do not know. It is possible."

3

"When you get to the Mamadam," we had been told by a priestess in the city, "wash your face in the running water, and call on the Mother of the River three times."

Another had said, "If your foot should trip anywhere, be sure to call on your ancestors, but if you should happen to slip at the Mamadam, you must go at once to the river, strike the water three times, and ask the Mother of the River to release your soul. It is a bad thing to lose your soul there."

And our principal story-teller in the city, who was something of a wit, had said: "You both have light eyes. Your hair is not dark. You are not unlike the Bonkoru people who are light, and who, up the river, you will hear called the Toné folk." He was speaking of albinos. "It may be that you have a river god without knowing it. When you come to the Mamadam the spirit may come to you. You may find yourself speaking the tongue that only the Toné people know, and dancing the dances to the river gods, and swimming up the rapids. It will be a fine sight to see you dance to the drums. There was once such a woman. A woman white as you are, you hear? I myself saw her dance. When she danced, she wore red, and put a plug through her lip, and as she danced her color changed. She became black. When the spirit was satisfied, it let her go, and she paled and was a white woman again. I myself saw that woman dance. I saw her grow black while she danced, and saw

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itself, an open shelter under a thatched roof resting on four posts. Inside it, upon the ground, lay a flat stone whitened with sacred clay, and on this a bottle stood. Directly behind the stone was the altar, a low table on which lay several egg-shaped pieces of the sacred pemba—the white clay—and some egg-shaped stones which had come from the bed of the river. A circle of iron, perhaps two fingers' breadth in thickness and having a diameter of ten or twelve inches, rested on the ground under the altar. A stick had been planted to face the thicket of wild pineapple that made a wall at the back, and from it hung a strip of white cotton for the ancestors. To the left of this was a simply carved stool, the tracery of its design become all but indistinguishable under the coat of white clay which covered it. Several bottles lay at the foot of this stool.

"Ya-hai, mati, you are praying to the Mother of the River. It is well," said Kasanya, as he came up to us with his pole-man and the men from Gankwe and interrupted our scrutiny of the shrine.

Followed by Sedefo and Asikanu, he entered the shrine, while the others stood with us outside the railing which connected at sides and back the posts upon which the roof rested. Kasanya called on the Sky God first. "*G'an gadu*," he began, "Mother of the River, Ancestors, grant that we travel safely. Grant that we bring the white man safely to the country of the Granman. Grant that the white man pay us well. I thank you."

As he finished, the listening men clapped their hands in unison, and spoke in chorus, "Great thanks!" Some distance away, down the slope which dropped to the river, was Bibifo, who wanted to be called Adrian. He did not come too near the shrine, but there he was, halfway up, with head bent, his lips moving as he muttered a prayer of his own.

Now Sedefo came forward, and Kasanya left the shrine and disappeared behind the pineapple bushes. When he came back he held leaves in his hand, which he said were sacred. He would crush them and put them in water dipped

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here at the Mamadam, and later he would bathe with this that he might be purified. Meanwhile Sedefo and Asikanu, each in his turn, addressed the Mother of the River, each speaking his errand and asking that his journey be prospered.

Bayo came up alone when the loading was quite finished. He sat down on a crosspiece of the shrine to one side of the flat rock, poured some of the contents of the bottle on the stone, and, taking up one of the egg-shaped pieces of pemba, he rubbed it between his fingers and touched the moist stone with his whitened hands. Now with his fingers he streaked his upper arm, just below the shoulders and over the muscles which played to the swinging of the pole-stick, and then his chest and knees.

"Mother of the River, give us a safe journey. Carry the white man and his woman without sickness. I thank you."

Later, when we were about to make off, he turned to us with his ready laugh. "You will walk well, Ba'ka. I have a strong spirit. I said things to the Mother of the River under my breath which you did not hear. The Mother of the River will look after you."

"What is this log, Bayo, right here on top of the falls? Why has no one claimed it?" we asked, pointing to the log of purple-heart close by, which we had noticed lying across the Mamadam.

"When it was sent down, something happened to turn it sidewise, and it was caught so. No one will touch it. It must be that the gods wanted it for themselves."

4

There are many shrines on the river. At the G'an Creek a man would speak his prayer from a distance, call the creek "ancestor," state his errand, and continue his journey. Far up the stream, where the juncture of the Pikien Rio and the Grand Rio forms the river which the Bush Negroes call the Saramacca, is the Tapu Wata shrine. There, our men said, we would do well to avoid looking, though our boat rested across the river more than a quarter of a mile

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But Bayo's pleasant story came to an abrupt end. Down toward the bank came Sedefo and his companion, motioning the men to join him. They all gathered in front of the guard of palm fronds, and began to discuss something in low voices, while from the village came the staccato rhythms to the Sky God and to the Kromanti spirits in tones at first soft, but swelling and quickening as they continued.

Sedefo came up to us at last and said, "I will tell you something, but you must not think the people of Pa'aba are unfriendly. I will tell you this. Let us go on and make camp farther up the river. There is a provision ground not too far away. We will make it in time."

In the boat Bayo told us that many were possessed in the village, and since here at Pa'aba they danced Kromanti strong, the men did not think it safe to bring us to the village. The year before Kasanya had spent a trying night here. Two or three of the men had found guns and had gone tearing about the village, so that not alone had the women shut themselves up in their huts, as they often did at Kromanti dances, but the men, too, had had to go in hiding.

"That is why we are going on. But I have a strong Kromanti spirit myself. I will go back to Pa'aba tonight and watch the men dance," he said with a laugh.

3

It was already quite dark when we made the planting ground. Up a narrow footpath we followed Kasanya.

"*Koni, koni*—Take care, don't trip at night," he kept calling to us. "*Mbwogo*—Hurry," he urged, though we needed no urging to keep close behind him in this narrow dark shaft which cut the greater darkness of the bush in two.

Bibifo would sleep in our boat to watch the provisions, Kasanya explained as he led the way, for the clearing was so far from shore that it was not wise to leave the boats unwatched.

"It is far," he said. "Grounds are cleared that way—not too near a village, not too near the shore."

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Among the people of one group, the principal ceremony may be held in the clearing itself. The drums are brought, and men and women and children pray for fertility. The beautifully carved apinti drum sounds the invocation to the Great God and to the ancestors, while the tall agida drums are brought to call the earth spirits. Two by two the men dance susa, the dance which in pantomime reproduces an ancient warrior's combat with spear and shield, the winner taking on a new combatant, until the final winner is given a wand as a reward, and gains for himself the title of "G'aman of Susa" until the next dance is held. Other dances follow. Perhaps the women now line up in two long rows facing each other, and dance bandamba, the dance which celebrates marriage and the birth of twins, and the birth of a child who is born feet foremost. The motions are the slow rhythmic manipulations of the muscles of hips and abdomen. It is a dance of fertility, danced by the very young girls as well as by those who have borne children. But the women who are past the age for dancing sit with their men, arms interlaced, swaying to the rhythms of the songs they sing. . . . There are offerings to the earth spirits, poured upon the earth out of black obia pots and calabashes, while other offerings are set upon the ground for the ancestors.

In another settlement, the ritual would be chiefly carried on in the village itself, and there might be a local dance of fertility, danced nowhere else on the river. "An old, old ancestress taught it to us," the villagers would say.

When it is time to plant, the woman plants with the man's help.

"When I plant a new field," said the younger woman, "I pray as I work."

And this is her prayer:

O Sky God, Mother of the Earth, Ancestors,
I am planting a field,
Make it bear;
People who come to me must eat,

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THE PROVISION GROUND

O spirits, you must help me.
Help me find food,
That I may give to those who come;
Help me find food,
That all those who come to me may eat.
I am planting pinda,
Make it come;
I am planting yams,
My yams must grow;
I am planting cassava,
Make my cassava yield;
I am planting rice,
Make it come;
Let the earth copulate well,
Let me, too, be fruitful;
Let me live by my work;
My children have gone down the river,
They have gone to the white man's country,
Let them live and be fruitful;
When they return to me,
Let them bring back possessions;
O spirits, I myself must live,
I have belongings,
Let my belongings live;
Mother of the Earth,
This new field which was found
Make it yield food for me,
Make it yield for those who come;
I have planted seed,
The seed must bear.
O Great God, Earth spirits, Ancestors,
I thank you.

6

After the planting, the life of the women is spent at the provision grounds for the greater portion of the year, for the crops must be carefully tended. The jungle is not hospitable to those who invade it, and it is only at the

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would be more serious yet, an evil spirit who would be lying in wait for a soul to use as emissary in his affairs of black magic, would snatch at the soul and take it away. If this happened, a person would sicken, languish, and die. Sometimes when a man tripped on the clayey bank, we heard him exclaim, "*Aga!*—Ancestors!" calling on these to protect him until he recovered his balance. But often we heard different cries. "Mi, Awana!" one man had called. "Mi, Nyamfai!" or, "Mi, Matchau!" or "Mi, Popoto!" These are all clan names, and for a time we assumed that instead of appealing to their ancestors, they called on the entire clan to come to their aid. But one day Sedefo lost his footing, and we heard him exclaim, "Mi, Fandaki!" Now we knew that Sedefo belonged to the clan of the Gankwe people, and we knew, further, that he was most emphatically not of the Fandaki clan.

"Sedefo, you are not a Fandaki. Why did you call on them?"

"My father belongs to the Fandaki. When we slip we call on our father's lo."

"Why, Sedefo?"

"I do not know. . . ."

Another day we were sitting and talking to a young man in an upper river village. A girl came and sat with us. "This is my sister," the man said. It was at a time when we were looking into these matters, and we asked, "Did the same mother make you both?"

"No," he answered, "she is here only on a visit. She lives across the river. Her father is my mother's brother."

"But she is not your sister, then," we said. "She does not even belong to your clan."

"Massa Neng'e! But she is my sister!" the man protested. "She is neither of my family, nor of my clan. But did not my mother's brother make her?"

"Could you marry her?"

He considered for a moment. "It would be possible. But it would not be good. . . . And the old women in the village would talk too much."

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be possessed by them. Between the roots of the tree offerings were placed—two or three bottles on their sides, or a calabash filled with sacred clay.

When the time came to dance to the gods of the kankan tree, a tunic of cotton was placed about its trunk. While the drums spoke to the gods, white clay was spread over the bark, a chicken was killed, and its blood allowed to spray the tree and drip into a calabash placed on the ground to receive it. Eggs inside obia pots were put beside the tree, and bottles filled with sweet liquor and the juice of sugar cane. All about its wide trunk the dancers swayed and leaped, each dancing to her own spirit until, at the height of their ecstasy, there were a few among them who would climb the great tree itself, and dance on its branches. The drums continued until the frenzy ebbed. Had they stopped sooner, those in the tree could not have remained there safely or in safety have descended to the ground.

At other times, women came to Gedeonsu to ask him for children, and those who were troubled by his spirit brought offerings, though the great dances were held when the old year came to an end, and the big offerings were then made.

"If a man were to cut down a kankan tree, Gedeonsu would cut off his foot. I myself saw it happen," said a man to us at S'ei. "And his sister got the god."

The kankan tree gods could be bought, too. A woman who wanted fertility would seek to buy Gedeonsu. Others might wish to have Tinné. Only an individual who had a spirit which gave him the right to make obias and call the gods could get the spirit for one who wished to buy it. Such a man would take an obia pot, fill it with water and place inside it cowrie shells which had not been cleansed. After speaking his invocation, he would add a sacred white stone, called an obia stone, and with a calabash in one hand and a bell in the other, he would go to the tree and address the spirits as he rang the bell. When the water became ruffled, it was a sign that the god had entered it. Quickly he would cover the calabash with a cloth and take it away with him.

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where, in the proper season, maripa nuts and rice were dried.

One quarter differed very little from another, except that in one there might grow the plant which yielded the red and black beans used for the sacred rattles, and for playing the game of adji, which entertained the spirit of the dead while the body lay in state. Instead of a house to the family gods, there might be found a mound of earth in front of one doorway, with an axe-head lying upon it as a shrine for a man's spirit, or a low forked stick sunk into the ground, holding a pot with water and weeds in it for the curing powers of its obia.

A village of any size had also a quarter in which stood the communal buildings. The council house which might also serve on occasion as the house for the dead was there. The menstrual house for the women, a small building which was recognized by a broken calabash, or a porcelain pot brought from the white man's city, lying outside the entrance, stood a little to the side. The Kromanti house, and perhaps an enclosed shelter for the bush gods who shared the shrine with the snake deities, was also located somewhere near the open communal shrine. A village wherein lived the clan head contained in addition a house for the ancestral spirits of the clan. This was called a *Fa'aka-pau wosu*, literally a flagpole house, a euphemism for the shrine to the ancestors for whom white cotton was put up on sticks. In this Fa'aka-pau wosu prayers were offered up for all the important ventures of the clan, and in time of stress a priest would come there with sacrifices, to bid one of the ancestors to enter his body and give him sight. When seizure came on, such a priest prophesied. Sometimes the ancestors were consulted in the same manner as that in which the will of the dead was ascertained. Men would take up a sacred plank and carry it in a state of possession; the elders would put questions to the ancestor who had been called. The answers were construed as favorable or unfavorable according to the way the plank tipped.

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As we made a tour of the village, we discussed all this with the chief and his bassia, and with the other men who accompanied us. When we reached the open place sacred to the great gods, we stopped. The shrine was a fenced-in space, perhaps eight or nine feet long and almost as wide. Inside was a slender pole, with a head carved on its top, and a cotton tunic about its middle, and this was the wife of the Great God, the chief said. The ladder with the platform on it, on which stood a bottle, was the shrine of the great Sky God. At the base of the image with the tunic were several bottles, some white clay, and a few empty glasses, and everywhere were sticks with cloth on them, many with the cloth in tatters. Where the cotton had altogether rotted away, the stick alone remained.

"Let us go in," said the chief to the men.

With the chief came a young man whose hair was braided, and who wore several obias on neck and arms. He was training to become an obia man. The bassia signaled us to follow, but the others remained outside.

The young man took up a bottle and poured some of its contents into an earthen jar, and from the jar he poured out a libation to the Earth Mother. The captain prayed, explaining that we were white people on our way to the Granman, that he was leaving in the morning to notify the Granman of our approach. Would the gods take him and us in safety, and would they see to it that all we saw should be seen with the eyes of friendship? Then he prayed for a child in the village who was ill, and for his people, and for the clan of the Granman, the Matchau lo, and for his own family. After each prayer he paused, and those outside the paling clapped their hands and sang out, "Great thanks."

Before the chief's prayer was finished, an old man came by with a bush knife in his belt, and his gun. He was just then returning from the hunt, and he stopped to thank the great gods for the kill he had made. He spoke in a whisper, but his intonation was as conversational as the chief's had been.

REBEL DESTINY

"Tonight there will be dancing for you," And'u said, when we left the shrine. "I will go and pray again before the dance, and then I will go to my hammock early, for I leave at sunrise. We will meet again at the G'aman's."

The bassia's wife followed us to our house.

"You are a woman, yet you went inside the shrine. Maybe you do have gods, white woman. When you go in again will you pray to the Earth Mother for the woman Kupa, who is my sister? Twice she bore girl children, and both sleep. Now she is with child again. She wears many obias about her neck, and daily she washes with white clay. She is the woman with the wooden obia doll hanging between her breasts. No, not the one who has the small black sack about her neck. Any woman who is with child wears that. You will know her when you see her. She is beautiful."

7

The dance was held in the bassia's quarter, in front of one of his houses. The bassia was a man of wealth. He had three wives, while the chief had but two. Whether one of the three was only nominally his wife and had come to him at the death of a brother, we were unable to learn, but that his means were large was apparent. The house where his personal possessions were stored was built high on posts. A house so raised stood out from those about it and bore the same name as the moon. Underneath it, in the shelter made by the posts, lay a partly made drum, some carved wooden implements, and carpenter's tools. There was also a forked stick in the ground upon which rested a black obia pot with water and weeds in it.

The children began the dancing.

Ayo, ayo
Ayo, ayei,
Agida comes,
Ayo, ayo,
Earth spirits come,
Ayo, ayei.

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Chapter XII

WOMEN AT WORK

1

A WOMAN stood in the council house, dipping her hand into a calabash and spraying the ground and walls. East and west, north and south she turned, with her fingers pointed downward toward the hard clay floor, then with palm upturned sending the water toward the thatch.

Evil spirits,
You must not come here,
You must dwell in the bush,
The bush is big.

O spirits,
Do not come here,
Remain in the bush,
The bush is big.

Startled by the white woman, who had taken her unawares, she allowed no apology. Her wet hand went quickly to her lips to show that not a word was to be uttered. In silence she withdrew, beckoning the white woman to follow her, and not until they were well away from the house did she break her silence.

"Come with me. Inside there no one must speak."

Some day, before we left, she might be able to tell what she had done and what weeds had gone into the water.

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782 Now she could but say that the Granman had asked her to see to this.

"It is good medicine. Do not be afraid," she added, reassuringly.

She led the way to her quarter, but before we had gone past the open shrine she stopped, and her eyes narrowed as she tried to come to a decision. From the quarter we were approaching came a crooning, moaning sound.

787 "A god speaks. The Apuku god has come to a woman this morning. Come. We will go to the G'aman's women," she said as she retraced her steps.

644 888 On a squared log in back of the enclosed shrine which adjoined the council house sat the Granman's principal wife. She was a woman who in her prime must have had beauty, but, though still erect, she had deep grooves on her face, and her breasts were the breasts of an old woman. Her head was closely shorn, as was the way of women whose children were grown. Like any other woman of the village she wore only the short cloth and the bit of kerchief which showed at her waist. Like the others she went to the provision ground almost daily. She and her younger daughter, who was named Wilhelmina for the Queen of Holland, [442] cared for their field together, and now they were working side by side.

644 Wilhelmina was more robust than her mother could have been at her age. She was tall, more her father's daughter. It was she who served his food and looked after his personal needs. She was the wife of the man who had brought the boat which Sedefo had rejected, because he did not trust its spirit. As she worked, her two children were with her, [856] the elder a child of three, sitting on the ground at her feet, and the other on her back, or in her lap nursing while she did her tasks.

Unlike her older sister, Wilhelmina had little of her father's astuteness, of his quick eye, or his schooled tongue. She went about with the slow, sensuous grace of someone not quite awake, while her older sister busied herself with making the rounds of the village, observing this and that

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84 It appeared that nothing in a woman's life was so dreaded
85 as childbearing, nothing more coveted than fertility, and no time so difficult and so anxious as when a woman was rearing her children.

● 782 "The day before a girl marries she prays all day to her
584 gods," said Dida, who with Fenekonde and several other women had joined us. "I begged my god Kesekia and gave him rice and rum. All day they played the agida. I begged
[340] him not to hate my husband. I begged him to give us children."

843 When a woman conceived, her husband made her many
[331] obias, and especially a black sack obia with four cowries
751 sewed on it, to keep her safe on the paths which led from
789 village to village, and from village to her field. The fear of the power of bad magic at this time was so great that, if we but looked at one of the pregnant women, or let our eyes rest on the several obias she wore, she grew nervous, covered them with both her hands, and disappeared in fear that the very power of our glance might weaken the potency of the charms. She did not believe in the white man's magic, but she was not in a condition to wish to put it to a test.

849 "When her time comes, a woman sees to it that she is in
782 her own village," said Fenekonde. "It is not good to give birth in the bush, or on the river."

This had almost happened to Wilhelmina with her last child. She was on the river alone in a boat. Chief Sungi of Dahomey met her and called on his gods to delay the coming of the child until he brought her home. He had strong obia, and so the misfortune was averted.

When the woman felt the first labor-pains, she prayed to the gods, and to her personal spirits. On the great Sky God she called, and the Earth Mother; on her ak'a, her soul; on the Yorka, the ancestors; and then she prayed to her personal gods, and particularly to whatever snake gods she might have, for some of these were known to be jealous of a coming child. But none of the gods dared be slighted.

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WOMEN AT WORK

"Before she begs the gods, she is seated on a mat, or on cloths. Over her head a white cloth is thrown. The woman who is there to look after the coming of the child takes a calabash with water. Then she throws the water on the ground where the woman is seated. She begs the great gods, and the ancestors, and the woman's soul, and the woman's gods.

"When the pains come, she ties a cloth about her belly tight, tight, until it hurts. The woman who helps her gives her some water if she wants it, and she presses down on the belly and makes the cloth tighter and tighter, until the child comes. The cord is cut with a knife."

The knife was the same as the kind they used for cicatrizing, and the after-birth was buried behind the house, in a small hole into which food and a piece of the sacred sangrafu wood was thrown.

"The child is washed, and then *pemba*—kaolin—is put on its forehead, and after that the mother and the child bathe every day and then wash in pemba. Sometimes a moon comes and wanes, and another comes, and the mother still puts the white on herself and on her child."

But if the birth proved to be difficult, then the husband was told, and he besought his own ancestors and his own gods to help his woman and child.

"If the child doesn't come, then it's a bad spirit. Then they call the obia man."

When a woman had difficulty, everybody was troubled about it. If a woman had been unfaithful to her husband and had not confessed it, it would be that which would be killing the child in her womb, and killing her as well. Sometimes it was *wisi*—black magic—and everybody wondered who had sent it to their village. Sometimes it was a god who was envious.

"If it is a god, then, when the woman is strong again, she goes to a more powerful god and buys from him the next child to come into her womb. The strong god sees to it that the jealous one finds no way to harm the child."

What happened when a child was born dead?

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"It hurts, doesn't it?"

"*Ma kye!* It is beautiful. The men like it too much," said the girls in a chorus, laughing at the suggestion that the pain of the cuts would deter them from having them made.

Sometimes, of course, the older girl admitted, the wounds did become ugly. There was the girl from Godo, whose suitor had kept bringing her more gifts because she was growing handsomer and handsomer. She was all but ready for marrying, when one of her thighs became infected after the cuts. The wounds were so ugly that she could not even wear the tunics of the grown girl. The family was sacrificing to all the spirits of the earth, begging them to heal the wounds.

7

These days there were many visitors in the Granman's village. There was the girl the Granman had summoned to dance for his guests. She had, perhaps, that very summer got her cloths, and her reputation as the best dancer on the river had won for her a suitor who gave her many armlets and anklets. Her voice was fresh and flutelike in quality, and so fine that when she sang she placed a folded cloth over her mouth, or danced with her head low. This was the way of modesty before people, and humility before the gods.

The women said, "Her spirits dance well," when they watched her.

There was the large girl from a village down river who came almost daily. She had the body of a woman, yet she went about unclothed, and sometimes she appeared only with a string about her waist.

"She is ready for *pangi*—cloths—ai," the women said, "but her people do not want to give them to her yet."

They would not explain, however, why the attire of a grown woman was denied her. We could only conjecture about it. Perhaps she had no suitor. The man to whom she had been promised might have died. There might be other reasons.

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surprised us that night at S'ei, and when he paused for a moment the women took up the chorus. From one song to another he went, and the hand clapping grew louder, and the chorus joined in more frequently, often breaking into his recitative, so that there was harmonizing of theme and chorus.

Once or twice the Granman called for a song we had already recorded, in order to give Mapasi a rest.

"Play us something from the lower river, white man. Let them hear their own songs, too, sung by others."

When the excitement of hearing the machine reproduce the song they had just sung had grown less intense, the singers repeated the song the phonograph was reproducing for them, for to listen to music without singing was difficult for them, just as when they sang, they could not but move their feet, though there was scarcely more than room for them to stand one close to the other. But a Bush Negro needs little room for his dancing, so that as the phonograph played their songs for them, they clapped their hands and danced in place. For a short interval, at least, the existence of the whites was forgotten in their pleasure of singing with the machine.

Until late into the night we played our records for them, and they sang for us. Whatever the consequences to the frail records of soft wax, we decided to play as long as they would listen, because of something in the manner of the Granman, something of wistfulness, let us say, and something, perhaps, which went deeper yet, as he sat there—a black Hamlet following a mute soliloquy while he looked on with his clever, perplexed eyes.

"Ai, so it is," he said at last, "and now let us go and get sleep." He rose and the others followed him out of the council house.

II

Early the next morning, while the tent on our boat was being finished, the Granman came into the council house with a calabash and a buzzard's feather in his hand. He came up to each of us in turn, and struck with the medicine-dipped feather the tops of our heads, brushed the eyes,

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touched the palms of our hands, and struck against the calves three times.

"This is obia," he said simply, and when he was finished, he went out.

Our cook knew this obia. It was Opete obia, medicine bearing the name of the sacred buzzard. It was given us that we might have a good journey down the river.

"Did you see how he was careful to touch the eyes?" our cook pointed out to us. "The Opete gets the eyes when it comes to a person, just like Kromanti goes into the head, and Vodu into the belly."

When we went out for a moment, and walked toward our storeroom, we saw the Granman splash water out of a calabash onto the floor and front wall of the house which held our supplies. Was it that our belongings might be safe on our journey down? It was no time for questions, and we asked none.

Women and children again came crowding about the white woman. Though they had been warned not to talk, there was still something of the warm feeling of earlier times which a command did not entirely destroy. Then, too, the order was that the sendoff was to lack no formality. As we stood there, a dog came running down the path. He was on his way to the river. In his mouth was a large ball of something which had been thoroughly charred. It was an offering to the river spirits, perhaps. It might have been less pleasant magic. He had been sent by men who were busy in the ancestral shrine.

When the white woman called attention to the dog, and asked what he held, the women recoiled with amazement that she should have seen the dog at all. Part of the magic might have been, as it was in some formulas we recorded, that he was to pass by invisible to the strangers. But this is conjecture. . . .

The moment before we went down the path to the river, Amasina came up alone, and gave us her hand. She was gracious, and completely at her ease. Whatever was said, she had faith in her god Towenu, who had vouched for our friendship.

REBEL DESTINY

We redoubled our urging.

"White man, do you know what it is to make an apinti—an obia drum?"

A man had to have the proper spirit before he might address the god of the tree from which the drum was to be made. When he had felled the tree, he cut off from the trunk the part he wanted to use and took it to his village. Over it he had to pour the blood of a cock which he sacrificed that the gods might come when the drum called them. The maker had also to provide sweet rum and cassava and eggs. The cassava was eaten by the people, but the eggs were for the spirit of the drum, and only half the sweet rum was drunk—the rest was poured over the wood. When the body of the new drum had been fashioned, the people gathered and sang, but they did not dance, for the head yet remained to be made. A pingo, or a deer, might furnish the skin, but these animals were shot where they had been tracked in the bush, and not offered to the drum. Only chickens were given it. And when the drum was complete, then the maker sang his song alone.

"But the drum is not finished yet. It can be played on, for it has a head, and its spirit has been satisfied. But the carving is not yet done. I have worked on it a long time," he repeated. "I want them to play it for my spirit when I am dead."

A silence fell as he finished. There was nothing more to be said.

"White man, we have sat together in pleasure. You have come to the true, true Saramacca from far away. You have bought the carvings of my people. The apinti drum I cannot sell you. But this stool you like I want you to have."

He took up one of the round-topped benches, with carefully worked sides, and four purple-heart inlays on top, each in the shape of a fowl.

"Take it with you to your white man's country. When you show it, write on a paper that the captain of Ma'lobbi made it."

M. Herskovits & Herskovits E-6 (1929-1930) 1934
[illegible] Bush Negroes [illegible]
Surinam

Chapter XVI

BAYO, THE PLAYBOY

I

IT HAD been a day of hard travel, down the Mamadam, through the Musumba Prati, and down the long wearying stretch of quiet water until we reached the Tita Buka Falls. The memory of the up-river passage of these troubled stretches had not yet worn down sufficiently to allow of contemplating the downgoing without a measure of strain, but our anxiety turned to astonishment when the paddlers, skirting above the thunder of the water, steered the boats into a barely visible channel down which we floated by easy stages.

"Mati-o," said chief Mataibo to the young men, when we had made the singularly fine passage, "the gods are taking them with pleasure. We must do the same!"

Passing the Gran' Creek he prayed from midstream, calling on the spirit of the creek, whom he addressed as ancestor, to give us long life in our white man's country.

Now we were here at Djamungo, at Bayo's village where, if he were only there, we should be seeing a fine dance, and where, what at the moment was far more important for us, many sacred objects awaited us. Djamungo was a village about whose magic other villages on the river were uneasy.

"Bayo is at Gankwe waiting for you. He is helping the men haul lumber, but when he hears you are back, he will come," said a woman who came up saying she was his

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"So we see from the Kromanti obia on your arm." Was she, a woman, possessed of the war-like Kromanti spirit? we asked her.

"It is as you see. I am a woman, and I have Kromanti—and it's strong Kromanti."

"We had not heard of women your age getting Kromanti."

"Ai, there are not many, but when my spirit comes, I dance heavy. I dance like the men."

We must have appeared unconvinced, for she became more emphatic.

"What they do in other villages, white man, I do not know. But I have Kromanti, and when the drums speak here at Djamungo I, too, come."

She rose and went into the inner chamber of the house, where the hammocks were hung, and brought out several objects wrapped in old cloth.

"Bayo said I should have obias for you when you came. He said you would pay well for obias. I have these for you."

The trading commenced. There were two small images—"*gadus*" they were called, both crudely carved. One was called Winti Nyamusi. It was a spirit which gave children to women.

"When I come to ask for children, then I take sweet rum in my mouth, and I spray the gadu, then I say, '*Naymusi, da wa' bano mi'i*—O Spirit Naymusi! Give me a fine child.' Then the child will come."

What was the other image, the larger one, with anteater's bristles inserted at sides and top?

"That is a Kromanti obia. It is the Opete spirit, the buzzard. When you take it with you, you must speak to it so. You must say, 'Obia-o, I am carrying you away with me. You must look after me, you must see that my life is spared, O great spirit.' Then you must spray it with rum, but not the sweet rum, not for Kromanti."

There were other obias she had for us, some to be worn about the neck, and others to be worn below the knee.

313 401 533 [534] *"You have come to go, come to go far, come to go far to bring the wood to the water. But it is long, it is far, to the river. Thank you, friends."*

Then the song was taken up by the workers and, with each rhythmic measure, the great piece of lumber went farther through the jungle on its way to the river. When he had chanted for us the greeting to the men, Bayo began to sing a song relating to men's casual exploits with [834] women and, as he finished the song, he laughed. "White man, if you came with us, you would hear what songs the men make up about women!"

3

126 The phonograph had delighted Bayo from the first. When Apanto had summoned the spirit of his obia to fight the machine, Bayo had watched. When the white man's glue had repaired the broken belt, and the hot sun had made the machine "walk" once more, Bayo had approved.

"The machine is not weak," he had said. "I will sing for it."

And sing for it he did.

But the curse of Apanto still troubled the machine, for up the river and down there had been difficulty with it. Often when there was a particularly good song to be recorded, the belt would give, the machine would fail the white man. The story of the prowess of Apanto had gone up the river with the Gankwe paddlers, and when the machine stopped, heads nodded, and we would catch the word "obia" among the murmurs of the bystanders.

126 123 789 796 Bayo thought, it seemed, that the machine's proud spirit was by this time properly chastened and, since twice the machine had refused to work while he was singing into it, twice had made him stop the song and its drum accompaniment, he decided to take matters into his own hands.

"White man," said Bayo, shortly after our return from up the river, "I will help the spirit of the machine. I will

M. Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
[illegible] Negroes [illegible]
Surinam

call the great gods. Apanto's spirit is strong, but Bayo has strong gods, too."

The machine was made ready for him, and Bayo sat down on a convenient box, his head bent over the tumao drum which we had acquired and which his fingers could scarce ever be near but that they played on it.

"It is not the right drum," he said. "You should have an apinti for me to speak to the gods. But I will try it with this one. Tomorrow I will go up the river to Djamungo. I know a man who has an apinti. You will give me money, and I will buy it for you. But now I will speak on the tumao."

He began the irregular tapping which we had learned to identify as the drum language. With one hand he carried the message, while with the other he played irrelevant motifs which served to confound anyone not initiated and leave him, as it left us, who had worked out some of the general principles on which this drum language was based, utterly unable to interpret it or to tell which were the significant elements.

"The great gods will look after your machine now, if they will listen to the tumao."

The next day Bayo went upstream to get us the apinti we so desired. He was not successful, but the gods had listened to him, when he had invoked them on the tumao, for Bayo's ministrations ended all trouble with our recalcitrant phonograph. Bayo indeed had strong spirits!

As the days went on, and record after record was put on the turntable, and with its tracing of songs, or examples of Bush Negro speech, or fragments of the rhythms that called the various gods, was taken off and carefully put into its felt-lined box, Bayo visibly swelled with pride. This was his doing! With his strong spirits he had called the great gods! He was young, and he had not spoken on the proper drum, but they had listened to him! So his thoughts went, and so he would repeat them to us.

His interest in the phonograph was intensified the more he saw of it, and he sang and spoke and drummed, either

alone or with some friend, into the wax cylinders that spoke back in such mysterious fashion. When Apanto came to visit us, Bayo smiled as he saw the obia man approaching from the landing place.

"His obia is strong, but mine is strong, too. Let him sing into the machine."

Apanto was visibly surprised when he saw in operation the machine his spirit had wrecked. "The machine is not weak, Apanto," we assured him. "It has its own strength, and now it has the strength your gods have given it. For in the true, true Saramacca, a great obia man spoke his message to the Great God into it, and since then it has walked well with us."

Out of the corners of our eyes, we could see Bayo's pride.

"Sing for us, Apanto," we urged, for he had a beautiful voice. "Sing us an Apuku song."

Now Apanto sang, not once, but many times. It is true that when we asked for Apuku he sang Vodu, and when we asked for Vodu he sang Toné, and when we asked for Toné he sang Kromanti songs, and when we asked for Kromanti he sang the sacred dirges called "Papa" songs. Yet this was not otherwise than might be expected, and it was not too difficult to play the records to interested men of other villages, whose startled comments would soon tell us the kind of song he had sung.

It was another day when Apanto again sang, and some of these who had witnessed his first victory were about. One such addressed himself to Bayo, who was sitting near.

"Apanto's spirit fought the machine, and stopped it. But the machine works and sings back to Apanto. Its strength has come back to it."

"Awa, Apanto's spirit is strong," we heard Bayo reply, "but there are other strong spirits on the Saramacca."

4

Bayo had spent the night at Gankwe, and had returned resplendent with a new hairdressing. We joked with

[illegible] & Herskovits 2-6 (1929-1930) 1934
[illegible] Bush Negroes [illegible]
[illegible]macca

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the space where the snake was modeled, but never touching it.

The man who was explaining the bench to us pointed once more to the snake. "It is not always lifeless as you see it here," he said.

When the snake came to life, trouble was brewing. It turned red, the color of blood, and all who came into the Kromanti house and saw it were warned of danger.

"How does the snake know when to come to life?"

"It is Agbo, the guard, who tells the snake. When she tells him there is trouble, he turns red, and then we know."

Immunity as well as knowledge was afforded by the magical powers of this stool and its snake and the Kromanti Mama.

"A man who has Kromanti sits down on the stool, and puts Agbo on his head, and when he has done that, nothing can harm him."

Thus is safety attained. But this only comes if the image has been propitiated by the Kromanti men. Rum, not of the sweet kind, must be offered it and prayers transmitted to its spirit on the drum which Kromanti recognizes—the apinti. If this is done, the Kromanti Mama will not lose its power, and the snake will continue to turn the warning color when danger threatens, and the bench will give protection to the men who have the Kromanti obia.

4

Not long after we had entered the bush we saw our first Kromanti dance. The people of several neighboring villages came to our base camp to dance for us. They asked, "Will you be afraid if the dancing brings Kromanti?" We told them we should welcome whatever spirits came.

Late that afternoon canoes brought people to our encampment for the festivities. Some, with an eye to trade, had brought carvings and obias, and, as we sat and talked with them about what should be given for the pieces they offered us, we could watch the dance outside our open hut.

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faces. The drummers stop to tune to the desired pitch, driving in the pegs with the back edge of a bush-knife. Then they resume, rattling out a sharply insistent tempo. Women begin to sway. Some of them start a plaintive jungle song. The drums never stop.

A woman disengages herself from the crowd and enters the open space. She bends forward from the waist at a right angle. Her arms form a circle beyond her head, saffron palms outward. She sways from the hips, her torso contorted with sinuous suggestion. Then her feet on the bare earth rap out the tempo that the brown fingers of the men are drumming on the dried skin. The others begin patting juba.

It is a false start. The woman interrupts her dance to criticize the orchestra for not playing in her mood. The crowd is not yet possessed.

Dodo, the woman *basia*, or boss, goes about urging the women to begin. Meanwhile the bahkra slips through the crowd pouring out drinks of high wine to add to the dark hilarity of the occasion. Always before drinking they will spit on the ground a libation to the gods. A mother gives the rum to her seven-year-old child, who does not flinch from the burning potion.

A new tempo. Three little girls, slim in their nudity, enter the central space. The oldest is about eleven. They stand with their backs to us and begin the *bandamba* dance. The evening is on.

Standing still in the firelight, hands behind their heads, they arch their loins and raise their buttocks up and down.

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tradition and authority. The older women's opinions bear considerable weight, for it is chiefly they who maintain the customs of the tribe. The mother-in-law and father-in-law are held in special esteem.

Unlike divorce, death is an occasion of genuine sorrow. If a man's wife dies, he may go into mourning for a whole year. His mourning consists in staying in his hut and doing no work, while his dead wife's family brings him food and supports him. When the year is up, he makes a sacrifice to "the little ground god, Amu" before taking another woman. He slaughters a fowl, letting the blood flow from the throat on to the earth. After this ritual sacrifice a big dance is held, and he is permitted to marry again. It is his next wife who insists upon this ritual.

When a man dies, it is sometimes incumbent upon his widow to have intercourse with his oldest surviving brother and marry him. The fact that he may already be married makes no difference whatever. It is imperative that they live together for several months; after that, if there is no affection between them, they can separate. This is a widespread custom among primitives, and there are remnants of it in the present-day customs of orthodox Jews.

Among the Aucaners it is not necessary for a man to have intercourse with his deceased brother's wife. He must, however, take care of her for a period of six months, after which time she is free to remarry.

A woman may publicly mourn her deceased husband by singing a dirge every little while.

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The Djukas may be possessed by almost any spirit - During
776 the dances they sometimes feel Apuku or Cromanti, as the
787 case may be. Once a Bush Negro was possessed by the spirit of a jaguar. The big buck seized a dog that happened to be loitering near by and tore it to pieces with his fingers. After a dance a man was seized by the spirit of a rebel leader of the old plantation days; he seized a cutlass and began hacking and smashing everything around him until the others forcibly restrained him.

776 The Bush Negroes do not worship the jungle spirits very
782 meticulously, but every village has fetishes, usually standing
[778] in little god-houses which are mere sheds to keep off the rain. Under the shade of the tiny roof can be seen the stiff visage of one of these deities, at times with remnants of food and drink at his feet. Beside the food there is usually a paddle for the god to eat with, elaborately carved like any food-paddle, and smeared with pemba dotee, the sacred white clay. This clay is smeared on all religious or ceremonial objects. For the individual to hold profitable converse with the gods, he must be smeared with it; pemba dotee seems to be a sort of catalytic agent between the soul and the deity. This custom is a West African survival, and not to be found among the Indians of Dutch Guiana.

778 Along the river, also, are occasional shrines where the
782 Bush Negroes may appease their deities when on long journeys, or when hunting. The shrine consists of a tall pole which may be either festooned or plain. At the base of many of the poles are shells, stones, bottles, and pieces of wood, as well as food and drink, possibly as a sacrifice. Every village,

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too, has a large pole outside of or in the clearing, which is used in praying to the god or to ancestors. The spirits of departed ancestors are invoked frequently and reverently.

Very often, when a man begins to hunt, he will call on the god and his ancestors for aid. The following prayer we heard intoned at the mouth of a creek, where a *gadu* pole was situated, by one of our paddlers who had entered to shoot fish. He clasped his hands, knelt down, and, with eyes closed, grasped the obeiah which was around his neck while he said the following words: "*Mooma nanga Tata nanga Masra Gadu. Me beh you mekki dem luku me kissi fu tru-tru wan anumara*"—"Father and Mother and Mr. God, I beg you make them see (those who do not believe) that I (you will allow me to) surely catch anumara fish."

The Djuka was gone about an hour. He returned with a fish weighing eight pounds. For this occasion he knelt in front of the praying pole and uttered the following prayer of thanks: "*Keh Masra Gadu, gran danke fu you, ala suma go nanga inye uh kun oto nanga bon. Gran danke fu ala den sani, ala den sweeti mofo deh wey kisi. Gimma furu pekin. Gran danke fu you*"—"Oh, Mr. God, many thanks to you for all who go in and come out with good. Many thanks for all things, all good things to eat which we caught. Give me plenty (full of) children. Many thanks."

In almost every village one encounters a wooden post thickly smeared with white clay on which is placed an iron pot. This apparatus is sometimes under a small thatched roof. Certain herbs are put in the vessel in case of sickness. At

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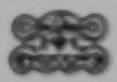
779 other points throughout the village, one also sees posts, hav-
● 780 ing attached to them cross-pieces, from which a length of white cloth is flying. A few bottles usually stand around at the base of these posts. Here one comes to address the Gadu (any divine being), or the spirit of a deceased person, when one has something to request, or wishes to return thanks for good luck. This petitioning is accompanied by the pouring of water or strong drink ("high wine" or *sopie* as it is called by the Bush Negroes) on the ground. One may encounter these cross-pieces with the white cloth at almost any place in the village, as for example, near a sacred tree or on some of the paths leading to or from the village. We may also see various *krom-tiki*, sticks or pieces of bush vines which have grown in a peculiar zigzag fashion. These, too, are supposed to have protective powers against evil.



525 Snakes, excepting the venomous varieties, are held in
778 reverence, and their worship is woven through the whole religious pattern. If a snake enters a hut, it is not molested, but allowed to return to the outside. If it shows no disposition to depart, it is chastised gently with a little broom-like contrivance and chided for not knowing its proper home. The bahkra who tries to kill a snake is prevented from doing

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751 778 calls them *obeiahs*. An obeiah is a charm or a form of magic to be distinguished from a *trafer*, which is a taboo. Obeiahs may be worn in the form of bracelets or necklaces, called *boe*. Bush Negroes never start out on a hunting or river trip without a number of boe around the arm, or leg, or neck. Thus the machinations of the evil spirits are set at naught.

One boe which Abaisa made for us is formed of heavy wire wrapped with white cord and set with cowrie shells. Worn on the arm, this will make you very strong. The charm will protect you while engaged in dangerous doings, such as [431] drinking river water after someone has been drowned in it. Abaisa made this bracelet out of friendship. It was given, not purchased; therefore the old-time gods are not offended at its being possessed by a white man.

[712] He presented it with great solemnity, taking a mouthful of rum and spitting it on the ground as a libation to the ground god, then squirting another mouthful over the bracelet. After that we all had a swallow of the same liquid and [553] Abaisa said a prayer in deepee-talkee. A somewhat similar ceremony attended the giving of a Djuka name to the white man—*Abentee*, provider.

751 321 778 The cowrie shells with which the obeiah is set are smeared with pemba dotee. The clay closes up the openings of the shells, thus preventing evil spirits from entering into the interior. These cowrie shells, which decorate practically all the [17] magic emblems of the Djukas, are commonly found among the savages of Africa, both on the East and West Coasts. They are also common in African art work, and at one time constituted a form of currency, papa moni.

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784 These food trafers are sometimes chosen by the individual,
262 and are acquired also by inheritance. A certain Bush Negro
[924 got his trafer in this way: His grandmother had a vision,
787] called *papa winti,* and she informed her grandson that she had been possessed. This made him feel the spirit of Cromanti. In that bad state he got the *idée fixe* that shooting a turtle would be reprehensible and dangerous. This animal then became his tabooed food, and for the rest of his life it is trafer so far as he is concerned.

787 So far only a slight attempt has been made to Christianize the Djukas. The Catholics and Moravian Brothers have established mission stations at a few points along the rivers. Their efforts at conversion appear on the whole to be unsuccessful. The Bush Negroes are converted in small numbers and very superficially; in moments of stress they will revert back to their jungle deities. The whole spirit of Christian customs is foreign to their mode of life. They have the Gran
776 Gadu, an adequate enough image of divine power. Their
● 782 prayers are sometimes said directly to him, or they pray to their ancestors to intercede with the Gran Gadu for aid. Sometimes the prayer is said by being beaten out on the tom-
[778 tom, for the tomtom is sacred, and the throbs of the great

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drums carry farther toward heaven than the talkee-talkee of a lone supplicant.

It is not easy to distinguish between the primitive's magic and his medicine. In the village organization a distinction is sometimes made between the *medicine man*, who is concerned with remedies for sickness, and the *obeiah priest*, whose business is charms and rituals. There are two or three obeiah priests to each village. Their profession is the propitiation of spirits, that is, magic and religion. The magic of the obeiah men is largely secret. Once we arrived at a village while a ritual of some nature was going on. Pots were stewing in the centre of the clearing, while obeiah men were moving around them. One held a rattle, which he shook monotonously. The bahkra was asked to leave. It was magic in the making.

The Bush Negroes possess an extensive system of primitive medicine. Various roots, herbs, and nuts are gathered in the jungle, and their use is mingled with various superstitions. The witch doctor or medicine man who prepares infusions from these herbs holds no exalted position in the esteem of the villagers; he is simply following a particular profession to which no special prestige is attached. He may, however, be an obeiah priest in addition to being a medicine man.

He prepares several kinds of medicine, among them the *snakee-kutti*, or snake-bite cure. It cures the bites of all reptiles and makes the person immune from future attack. Snakee-kutti is made in this way: a venomous snake is killed and the head and the tail-end are cut from the body; the tail

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obeiahs, house gods, fetish houses, menstrual huts, and matrilineal system of inheritance are all to be found as ancient customs among the forest tribes of the West Coast. Other details, such as the use of chickens for sacrificial animals, the huts with their rectangular walls, the manufacture of butter from the palm worm, the sacredness of snakes and alligators, the use of drums for religious supplication, and the beating of them with the hand instead of with a stick as the Indians do, are also customs which are similar to West African customs and probably derived from them. The impaled turtle-shell on a staff, the badge of the witch doctor's profession, represents the symbol for the female genitalia among some West African tribes. The Bush Negroes' boats and paddles are typically African in design. The *awasa* dance of the Saramaccaners was borrowed from the Aucaners, among whom it is a direct West African survival.

From the study of these culture survivals among the Djuka tribes it can be seen that most of the jungle civilization of the Bush Negroes is derived from their West African ancestry, modified here and there by contact with the Indians of their new home. The remainder of the material culture of the Bush Negroes is borrowed from the white settlements along the coast, from which gunpowder, fish-hooks, bush-knives, and other articles filter upstream.

[P. 192 is Work]

/12 cont./

796 Then they call all the neighbors together to take part in the
273 festivities to be held, which consist of invoking their gods amidst continuous dancing and excessive drinking.

They begin the festivities only on a Friday and usually finish on a Sunday or Monday, depending on the larger or smaller
[147] supply of drink, so, lacking this, the festival ends. After the conclusion they are usually extremely tired and listless and give themselves up entirely to rest for at least two or three days.

It is a definite requirement at these festivities to be very amply supplied with strong drink, because one must drink without
[782] interruption in order to remain in a continuous narcosis. With each drink they first pour a little on the ground, -- so that it, too, on which they find themselves so gay, may participate in their enjoyment.

[262] The merrymakers then take care that they will by no means
[577] be lacking in fish, wild game, bacon, rice, etc., since it is a matter of honor with them to display the most lavish hospitality on such occasions.

776 The gods that they worship are:

Loango Gado,
Papa Gado,
Cromantie Gado,

/13/ names certainly derived from the various African tribes of these names.

In the first two they glorify nature and everything created, from which it therefore appears that these are merely subordinate
[787] gods of the unnamed, single great spirit. The last is above all regarded by them as the mediator who transmits their wishes to the great spirit; he is invoked especially at burial ceremonies and for consultation in connection with serious illnesses.

796 They do not have any other cult or religion, so far as I was
[771] able to discover, but only the fixed habit of still celebrating to-
[132] gether and with their chief and captains on the first Friday of the new moon in the month of October or November, after the long
[783] dry period has set in for good, a great feast that has as its goal a general atonement, to cleanse them of the misdeeds that they have

committed.

/13 cont./
796 committed. This feast, at which pigs and poultry are sacrificed,
[782] must last for four weeks and thus ends with the following new moon. They pray, dancing and singing, while from time to time they kneel in order to ask for blessings.

[778] In the place where their idol stands they plant long sticks in the ground at certain intervals, on which they let flutter a number of long narrow strips of white cotton in the manner of flags.

[781] They celebrate this feast, for which no costs are spared, with all possible solemnity; it is attended by old and young and is very important among them.

Chapter IX

Conceptions about Death and Eternity

775 They believe that at death the existence of the human being ends, but that the spirit of the deceased does not disappear altogether and remains among them for a long time. Also they believe in unlucky spirits, which, as a result of an earlier evil life, must wander about restlessly, while the life on earth of the peaceful spirits is supposed to have been free of misdeeds.

They do not assume rewards in the hereafter for good deeds; /14/ misdeeds, however, in their opinion, are punished with restless wandering about.

[755] They say that those spirits know all that happens, and that they can come in contact with them at their feasts, that they receive many a hint and information, and through concealed signs come to know remedies against diseases, to which they attach the fullest confidence.

Chapter X

Marriage and Marital Life

584 Their marriages take place with few ceremonies. Frequently young men and even men ask pregnant women, in case they should bring a daughter into the world, to designate that girl as their wife,

/25 cont./

928 695 [344] The peace conditions are determined in a large building (shed). This shed is entirely open, they call it their court of justice, derived from kroetoe hoso or piketti (1). When they find

1. Piketti, place where the execution of the punishment takes place.

themselves there, whether this takes place after the conclusion of an internecine battle, or between spouses, members of a family, or former friends, the heads of the parties gather in the shed referred to and choose their places in the upper part of the building. Subsequently those concerned in this matter place themselves in the vicinity of the heads, and around these all those present who make up the public.

When all have been placed, one of the heads takes a cup (as a rule a calabash) filled with dram or still unfermented sugar [769] cane. He scatters a few drops of this on the ground in various places [782] in the shed, which signifies that their ancestors, who also once sat on this spot and passed judgment, are to be called up in the memory of all, and that the deceased, by having this offering presented to them first, have had respect paid to them.

Once this solemnity has been carried out, the cup goes around to each one, and each of those present takes a small draught from it. After it has been emptied, and none of them has refrained from drinking from it, the peace is regarded as concluded; all feuds are forgiven, and the enmity has ceased to exist.

Should it happen that one of those present refuses to drink, then he must publicly give the reason for his refusal, and then it may sometimes happen that the considerations concerning the quarrel start anew.

[693] /26/ Then the elders or council members ordinarily withdraw from the shed and leave behind only their granman (1).

1. Head or governor.

Those who have withdrawn divide themselves into different groups and consult with one another, make the matter clear and

174 /30 cont./

613 1st. Lo = de facto grouping of rebels of any provenance,
614 which has in the long run split up into lineages but which remains
621 in the form of a common worship;

571 2nd. Lo = lineage, from the very beginning.

184

Conceptions Relative to Kinship and Marriage

769

[121] Ties between the individual and the ancestors. Before examining more deeply the social and family structure of the Refugee Blacks, it is indispensable to study what religious ties are implied between [184] the individual and the ancestors. Here one is in the presence of basic beliefs which seem identical in the various tribes of Refugee Blacks of Guiana and of which their structure is the consequence.

In the civilizations of Blacks Africa it is supposed that a [711] current of life and /31/ strength circulates from the divinity to men through the medium of the ancestors. Among the Refugee Blacks it is taken for granted that in this respect each man is bound [782] to his ancestors through the maternal line only. If he falls prey to illness, injustice, or adversity, he can call only on them in his prayer.

593 That does not mean that the tie with the father is ignored [827] or considered as having little importance; it is taken for granted, as we shall see, that in the creation of man certain psychic elements are transmitted from father to son. But the current of strength binding the individual to the ancestors does not pass through the father. One cannot pray usefully to the soul of one's dead father. [755] If I am sick and divination incriminates the action of my dead [782] father's soul, I cannot address either prayer or offering directly to him; for that I shall have recourse to one of his near relatives in the maternal line.

/66 cont./

613 554 The small, recently founded lineages attached to a lo each designate a head: for example, the Afi lineage has Awéni as head. But this head remains subject to the authority of the captain of the lo and his office has no official existence.

/67/ The appointment is made by a council - kuutu - of the lineage, but it is not valid until endorsed by the grand man.

[787] When the deceased captain did not, while living, designate any successor, his yɔrka is interrogated in order to know whom he prefers. That does not have the force of law but can influence the council.

The council meets several days after the end of mourning for the deceased captain. All the male members of the lineage, regardless of age, give their opinion. Strictly speaking, they do not vote; but the nomination is considered valid only if three-quarters of those present are in agreement. If not, they disband without having decided anything, and the lineage can remain without a head for years. On this topic can be cited the example of the Awara Bakka lo, which remained without a head from 1935 (?) to 1953, until the appointment of Konduku. During this time the [643] grand man had designated Captain Popo, head of the Lapé lineage, to secure the interim. As for the religious functions, they were taken care of by the Joyen of the lineage.

The captain has the following functions within the lineage:

1) He is priest of the ancestor worship and presides over [793] the prayers and offerings made before the fraga tiki. In this duty [769] he is replaced in case of absence by the oldest man of the lineage.

In case of the death of a member of the lineage from the [761] effect of the kunu, the captain convokes all his people in order [782] to proceed to collective prayers and offerings intended to appease the gods;

/68 cont./

613 624 [562] The basia are the mouthpieces of the captain, and not at all deputies having specific authority over a definite fraction of the village. There are three or four per village; in addition there are one or two women basia through whom the village head commands the work reserved for the women.

613 554 241 782 The head of the lineage possesses no religious powers over the land. The Refugee Blacks assume that the fertility of the soil depends exclusively on local divinities, to whom each one prays on his own behalf.

613 554 681 The captain, no more than the council, does not have the right to expel a member from the lineage, even for marked unworthiness. This is one of the most remarkable aspects of the legal conceptions of the Refugee Blacks, tied to the idea that a lineage represents only one single life. There again the thought of the Refugee Blacks can be regarded as the extreme opposite of the thought of the Bamiléké, with whom the head alone retains possession of the rights over the land, expulsion constituting the supreme social sanction.

881 Initiation; age classes; men's society. These African institutions seem totally unknown to the Refugee Blacks. No form of initiation of adolescents exists, and no ceremony marks collectively their entrance into social life. Circumcision and excision are not practiced. For the children, boys and girls, there are two stages: that of the first garment, which is given upon the appearance of the pubic hair, at about 12-13 years, without ceremony, and the end of education which coincides with marriage.

[304] [852] [561]

561 The society of the Refugee Blacks rests however in large part on age hierarchy; strictly speaking there are no age classes involving a fixed organization, but they exist tacitly:

/12 cont./

577 691 641 The morality of the Refugee Blacks knows in effect only obligations of a social and religious order. As for everything concerning material life, each one has the absolute right, one could even say the duty, to act as he sees fit, insofar as he does not wrong anyone else.

643 671 641 [156] If the grand man gave an order obliging someone to act against his own interest, for example if he wished to lower arbitrarily the price of boats, this order would be lawfully void. If the grand man has very great personal influence, he can persuade the Boni that it is to their interest to obey such a prescription, but in no case can his command have the effect of imposing by force an arbitrary order foreign to the social and religious tradition; the present grand man is weak in character to boot, sensitive to the influence of the Creoles and very little given to exerting any authority.

643 791 In reality, the office of grand man is above all religious. The grand man centralizes, if one may say so, the struggle against evil forces and watches ceaselessly over the welfare of the collectivity.

643 764 When a man dies, his near relatives come to report on the questioning of the yɔrka. Burial cannot take place until the grand man has made sure that all the prescriptions have been filled. People come to report to him again after the burial so that he can be sure that no suprahuman danger remains.

643 795 [782] The grand man has special power over the yɔrka (spirits) of the dead, which the beliefs of the Refugee Blacks place on a level intermediate between the human and the divine. When one of these yɔrka exerts against a lineage a vengeance (kunu) whose malignity goes beyond habitual bounds, the grand man beseeches it to stop; they allege that things go back to normal, at least for a time.

This power attributed to the grand man invests him, in the eyes of the Boni, with a suprahuman character. It is the very foundation of his political power.

/72 cont./

643 The grand man acts as land head for the whole of the tribe.
778 It is he who has the care of the sanctuary of mama gɔ̃ and who
241 prays each year in the presence of a large gathering of people for the fertility of the soil.

643 The grand man is the priest of Odun, divinity whom the Boni
743 regard as avenger of offenses against moral and religious law; by
776 virtue of this, he alone is qualified to administer the oath against
782 wisi (sorcery) and to implore the mercy of Odun toward those who have gone against his laws by fighting with arms.

643 In his religious functions this usually weak and unobtrusive
156 man acts with sovereign authority and assurance, and we have several times seen people tremble before him.

643 If someone has seriously transgressed the customary laws, or
681 if he has stolen, committed adultery, given blows, poured forth
[673] serious insults or curses, the grand man inflicts on him punishment proportional to the gravity of the offense, such as making planks, /73/ a boat, pounding rice (if it is a woman). The product of the punishment is acquired by the grand man, as are the fines in money which he imposes in less serious cases.

643 For example in October, 1952, two adolescents of Boniville,
685 Awétipay and Adyuka, were surprised while they were trying to break into an inhabited house; the grand man sentenced them forthwith to three days of forced labor, in the course of which he made them clean the approaches to the village and collect for his benefit wood for heating.

643 He can also punish disobedient or disrespectful young men
689 by making them do work reserved for women, such as weeding
462 the approaches to the village and the removal of dog droppings.

643 The grand man can confine a man to Boni villages by for-
681 bidding him to go beyond l'Enfant Perdu to the north and Kormotibo to the south; that is called sitafu sama (sitafu = captive). The man concerned, deprived of means of earning his living, thus becomes dependent on his family until he makes honorable amends.

/122 cont./

845 [621] Observation at Maripasoula, November 3, 1956. The wife of Baïna, boatman of the border-fixing mission, gave birth at Pikin Tabiki, small farming village where she works with her mother and the latter's husband. Baïna went to be present at the delivery.

It was very long and dramatic. According to Baïna, an ogi sani had entered the child's body, making him stiff and impossible to extract. As a last resort they called a neighbor, T..., known for having a good gita. He called his gadu who revealed an efficacious remedy, since after the body of the sick woman was bathed with the prescribed leaves, the delivery ended successfully.

846 [515] Since we were leaving on our trip, it remained to find someone to take his place in fulfilling one of the husband's duties: cutting the supply of wood for heating the water necessary for the hot douches /showers?/ the mother was going to be given several times a day for about three months. He made an agreement for this with Kwata, his mother-in-law's husband, to whom he will pay about 1,000 francs. [465]

851 613 [603] Presentation of the child. On the eighth day the maternal grandmother (or great-grandmother if she is still living) takes the child and gives it to another ancestress of the same lineage, stationed in front of the house. The latter presents it to the family. Then [769] the head of the lineage, without taking the child, goes to the [778] fraga tiki to make an offering of tafia, asking the ancestors to [782] protect it.

For example, for the birth of A... (Lapé Tabiki village), son of ○ Yundu (L2, G60), it was Asakundu, grandmother of Yundu and great-grandmother of the child, who came to take him in the house and gave him over to her sister Térésa (L2, E57) to present him to the family (see genealogical table of the Lapé lineage, fraction 2).

/139 cont./

684 Committing pikadu is one of the most serious offenses that
688 a Refugee Black can commit; of course, as in the rest of the moral prescriptions, no abstract principle is called on: the elders teach the children from their earliest years: "If you com-
[613] mit pikadu, you will fall ill or die." The head of the lineage inflicts severe punishments on the guilty people to boot: for the man, to make a large number of planks with an adze; for the woman, to prepare and winnow as preparation for the next broko de several touques /cans/ of rice, a long and tedious job.

588 However, if in spite of insults and blows a man and woman of the same bee absolutely insist on marrying, people end up, for the sake of peace and quiet, by accepting the ac-
[769] complished fact. They go to the fraga tiki to make an offering
[778] of tafia to the ancestors to ask them to forgive the offense
[782] committed. No reprobation extends to the children born of this union.

613 In the Awara Bakka lineage, which has practically re-
588 jected the law of exogamy, the principle of a sanction remains
[684] and there is a pretense of chasing the guilty ones across the village.

Not being able to use coercion and not having the right to expel a member of the lineage, captain and council can exert no material sanction.

613 The same notion of pikadu is attached to unions between
684 persons of the same patrilineage, although these patrilineages have no effective organization and exist only by the transmission of the fundamental interdiction, bwasi kina.

[819] Before concluding an official or even clandestine union, the man and woman make sure that they do not have the same bwasi kina and in such a case give up their project; that, even if they are from different tribes, for example a Boni woman and a Saramaka.

6:Hurault--245a K-5 (1948-1958) 1941 SR8 Bush Negroes: SR8 Boni

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Fig. 22. Offering of food to the ancestors.

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Fig. 23. Interrogation of the dead person.

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at collecting in a large demijohn the tafia brought. It will be used at the dances which will take place that very evening.

764 769 About 1:00 P.M. the coffin is nearly finished, the upper wings are fitted and ready to be nailed. This is the moment when, according to custom, the meal must be served. But nothing is to be seen; the village women have talked more than worked, and their preparations are far from finished.

Time passes; discontent grows among the kisimĭ, who threaten to stop work. About 2:00 P.M. the women come in a procession led by the oldest ones to apologize for the delay; they have to pay a forfeit of a bottle of maripa oil, in consideration of which the kisimĭ agree to eat; the scene lasts at least 30 minutes, in a flood of words whose transcription in extenso would fill a book.

• [782] Before the meal an offertory rite is gone through; two of the youngest among the kisimĭ slowly go around the mortuary shed carrying a dish of food; at the same time they eat, they throw food on the ground, without uttering a single word. Then they go to the river where the dish is washed.

[782] After the meal the coffin is consecrated by the sacrifice of a rooster. The leader of the kisimĭ sprinkles with its blood first the bottom at the back, then the upper side wings.

The presenting of pieces of cloth, having gone on since noon, comes to an end. Two kisimĭ stand beside the body; a woman of the lineage unfolds and hands to them the cloths given by the people present.

The kisimĭ grab the piece of cloth and unfold it. One of them says these words: "N... beli yu, umĭ (N... buries you, woman)." They do that if they recognize the cloth offered by N...; if not, they simply say: "Someone buries you, woman." Then they put the cloth on the preceding ones piled up on the body. There may be 126 camisas (1) and

/168 cont./

764 co-wife, on the contrary, are completely veiled and show by their state of prostration the keenest sorrow. Each of them is assisted by a female relative who supports them when they have to move somewhere else, for they are supposed to be too overcome to move alone.

764 787 761 The interrogation as to the causes of death has already taken place the day before, but Tafanié proclaims, in front of me, the result of it to the latest arrivals: the deceased was struck down by a yɔrka which pursues the lineage with its kunu. She had already received several warnings in the form of illness; the yɔrka had demanded a payment which she and her near relatives had neglected to furnish. Impossible to learn anything further before being able to interrogate this yɔrka, whose habitual bearer has left for Saint-Laurent. It is necessary to wait for his return in order to mollify the yɔrka's anger.

764 769 778 [613] About ten o'clock the members of the ɩlɛnti kuutu go toward the fraga tiki of the Awara Bakka lo, in front of which they all sit down on their stools. I notice that not a single man of the dead person's lineage appears in the front row. In it I recognize Popo (Lapé), Poopu (Dipélu ɩi, Kormotibo), Tafanié (Papaïston). The one who is speaking is a foreigner passing through, a very aged and respected Djuka.

[782] The elders invoke Masa Gadu and the ancestors in general, asking them to protect them from adversity in the future; then the offering of water and tafia takes place (no cane juice). I notice that a little is poured on each of the secondary fraga tiki erected for the sake of each one of the ancestors who pursue another lineage with their kunu. That lasts about a quarter of an hour.

764 787 776 428 424 Next someone goes to ask the deceased to whom she bequeaths the Papa gadu god which manifested itself in her; for the gods are bequeathed like the rest of the inheritance, even if those concerned are divinities which exercise the kunu

/194 cont./

The great gods Gwangwéia and Gédéosu of the Djuka are not known to the Boni.

Strictly speaking, no cult of Masa Gadu exists. No edifice is reserved for him, he has no priests, and no collective ceremonies are conducted on his behalf. He is nevertheless constantly present in the religious life of the Boni, associated with ancestor worship. Every ceremony of ancestor worship includes an invocation to Masa Gadu. From time to time, for specific motives such as the illness of a member of the lo, people go /195/ specially to the fraga tiki to invoke Masa Gadu. The oldest man of the lo officiates, while a younger one pours a little water and tafia at the foot of the fraga tiki; the elder addresses Masa Gadu in everyday language, in simple terms, in a familiar conversational tone, asking him for the cure of illnesses or the end of calamities. Those present, seated in a semicircle, punctuate the end of the speech with some rhythmical applause, uttering the ritual formula of thanks: "Gaã tẽgi tẽgi fi yu, Masa Gadu."

Outside of these ceremonies which hardly go beyond the framework of the lineage, everyone may address Masa Gadu directly by praying aloud, if, for example, he finds himself alone in the bush and prey to an illness. One never addresses Masa Gadu other than for a specific material purpose. Inner prayer for the purpose of spiritual perfection does not exist to our knowledge among the Refugee Blacks.

One applies directly to Masa Gadu when one believes oneself to be the victim of an iniquitous action (see curse). However, although the Refugee Blacks have a very lively sense of justice, they never call Masa Gadu to witness for the cruel and arbitrary vengeances (kunu) which the lower divinities are believed to exercise on them. It is taken for granted that all these divinities do conforms to the role which Masa Gadu has assigned to them and that the suffering they inflict on men is indispensable to the proper working of the universe.

6:Hurault--303 K-5 (1948-1958) 1961 SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Boni
Surinam SR4

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Odun's laws create an irreducible cleavage between the Refugee Blacks and the Creoles. The Creoles of Surinam, like the West Indian gold miners of the Maroni, profess Christianity, but they have a special conception of it, associating with Christian ideas /198/ beliefs of various origins and often magic practices. If in quasi-totality they reject magic aimed at doing harm without reason, they take very generally for granted:

--Counter sorcery inspired by vengeance;

--"Invocations" to the spirits of the dead and divers magic formulas in which it is believed one captures the vital force of these spirits in order to make practical use of it;

--Charms having the purpose of forcing the love of a person one desires.

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The Creoles are as attached to these conceptions as the Refugee Blacks to the laws of Odun, which are absolutely contrary to them. They have such importance in the thought of both that it would be unthinkable to make a group of Creoles and a group of Refugee Blacks live together for any appreciable length of time integrated into the same organization. Attempts made to do this, especially in Surinam, have always failed. When an economic activity engages them in the same work in the same locality, Creoles and Refugee Blacks form two separate groupings, each living according to its own law.

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If Refugee Blacks leave their group for any great length of time to settle in the midst of Creoles, if they do not come back periodically to renew the oath of Odun, it is taken for granted that they have abjured his laws and that they are suspect of wisi. It happens that people who have spent a whole portion of their lives in the midst of the Creoles come back to live in their native village because they are prey to adversity or sickness; they are always welcomed (the lineage cannot expel one of its members), but chances are great that they will be declared wisimi upon their death. This was especially the case with an

787 /201 cont./
791 The elders then consulted the oracles and perceived that Mimi
796 was victim of an Ampuku named Maogan which for a very long
[613] time had been pursuing the Kotika lineage with its vengeance
[784] (kunu). In order to protect herself, she sought to have herself given a more powerful god, and she became the pupil of an obiaman specialist in the cult of the Papa gadu. In this way she
[982] had a Papa gadu named Ayaémé, divinity of beneficent character to which, in difficult cases, her family applies in order
[346] to obtain advice, protection, and remedies. She had a little hut built beside her house, where the god goes to rest when it
[784] has finished each of its trips to the country of men. Ayaémé imposed on Mimi its kina which concerns a fish. But even with all this she was not rid of her kunu of the Ampuku; and one day, something it had not yet done, the latter revealed itself in her
[784] and spoke through her mouth. It announced that it would con-
[782] tinue to exercise its kunu against the Kotika lineage. They appeased it by sacrifices of red cloth and beer; since then, it seems calm and in rather good humor. It comes into Mimi from time to time and speaks in Saramaka language. They are very afraid of it, but they do not hesitate to question it and ask it for
[784] remedies, which it sometimes indicates. It laid on Mimi three gadu kina concerning the acouchy, the agami, and the armadillo.

791 Organization of the cults of possession. Strictly speaking, no
787 religious brotherhoods exist in Boni country; there are only
794 teachers - bas(2) - who have received their power from another

2. It does not seem advisable to translate this word by "priest." In the minds of the Refugee Blacks, this is a matter of a teacher teaching pupils; they use the same word to designate a European or Creole schoolmaster.

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776 This shows that in the minds of the Refugee Blacks, the
787 animal is simply a prop for the god. The god borrows this body
825 in order to manifest itself, but it is not bound to it by nature. These conceptions are totally contrary to those of the Indians, who tend to personify in their minds the beings and phenomena of nature.

776 As we have said, the Boni do not see these gods since the
787 person possessed loses consciousness. But in the time of the ancestors, there were people who used to see the gods, and it is through them that their present-day descendants have an idea of their appearance; on the other hand, certain gods such as the Ampuku and the Bunsunki may be seen in dreams.

Sometimes the residence of this or that god is known, for it has revealed it through the mouth of its bearer; the god's
[823] name is then given to that place. For example, at the mouth of the Abounami there is a fall named Ma Akoti Gadu Sula. It is there that the god resides which revealed itself in olden days in an old woman named Akoti.

776 Connections with the group of relatives. The idea of a god
613 protector of the lineage, whose worship, brought by the founder of the group, is regarded as indispensable to the life of the collectivity, is not found clearly among the Refugee Blacks. There are actually many divinities which have entered the lineage and which are worshiped collectively. But these di-
[784] vinities are intruders; they have penetrated into the group by force in order to exert an inexorable vengeance against it.
[782] People do not apply to them to ask for protection, and they are worshiped only because they cannot be expelled.

776 /205/ There is not believed to be any kinship tie between the
602 gods and men, nor any tie of a systematic or exclusive character.

776 /209 cont./
[778] wata ŋgi. Indians of the water. In certain spots, people have
[782] known since the time of the ancestors that there resides such a
Bũnsuŋki, whose name they know; when they pass there, they address a prayer to it while making a sacrifice of tafia.

776 (The Bũnsuŋki must not be confused with wata mama, the
171 mama-of-the-water of the Creoles, a dreaded divinity but one which the Boni do not appear to worship. The wata mama lives at the bottom of deep holes in river beds and never allows her face to be seen; she sometimes abandons one of her long hairs on the rocks and he who finds it becomes rich).

776 /210/ The Bũnsuŋki can enter into human beings, exclusively,
787 it seems, into women. They give a different gita from those
[562] of the Kumẽnti. The possessed person dances at the edge of the
[789] water, then swims and dives for a long time. They affirm that if its possession is sufficiently intense, the genie carries the possessed woman along to the bottom of the water, where she stays for a very long time without any harm! That is supposed to have happened especially in Asisi village to a woman named Dabisa.

Possession by the Bũnsuŋki is not frequent. In 1952 it was known in Boni country in only three women.

[562] As for men, they may perceive these divinities in dreams
[788] and receive benefits from them. For that they go to the place
[782] where it resides and bathe, uttering an invocation: "O god, watch over me, protect me, come to me at night when I sleep, speak to me, act so that I may not be sick, so that I may get rich." The following night, the divinity will come in a dream, demand a sacrifice (beer in general), say that it /grants/ the prayer.

776 The Vɔɔdũ (1). These are gods much feared for their evil

1. This word is obviously a deformation of the Dahomey word vodũn.

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153 791 787 534 special drum is used, about two meters long and very narrow, devoid of any decoration, which is called lãŋga dɔ̃ or papa dɔ̃.

787 [562] To call on her gita, the possessed woman (they are almost always women) stands, puts on a piece of cloth which she always keeps nearby and always takes along with her when she travels: this is the garment of the god; it consists of a sort of scarf crossed in front; then she throws white clay, pemba, on her feet from right to left and left to right while invoking the god. Possession is almost immediate. One sees the woman's eyes roll up and her expression become haggard. The god does not cover himself entirely with pɛmba like the Kumẽnti, he makes himself a sort of headband on the forehead with white clay.

787 788 539 [782] He begins with an invocation to Masa Gadu said in ordinary language.

"Masa gadu, gi mi pimisi, beka mi na pikin nẽŋge; ala sani di mi ɔ taki, na yu mu gi mi kaakiti, beka na yu abi mi kaakiti, da mi ɲyãfalu gi yu."

"Masa Gadu, I implore you, for I am a humble creature; (in) all that I am going to say, it is you who will give me strength, for my strength is in you; I shall exalt you."

787 788 [198] Next come formulas of welcome to those present, which are the exact translation of the formulas of greeting of everyday life, then songs, all in the Papa language. After about a quarter of an hour, it enters a hut and sits down, answering in ordinary language the questions of those present, always in a singing tone.

787 Possession by Papa gadu does not have the bestial character of possession by Kumẽnti; outside of the dances, it does not involve brutish gestures or bizarre acts; the possessed woman hums softly in a shrill voice, moving with graceful gestures.

[531] /212/ Sometimes she draws strange signs on the huts; the Boni state that that is a kind of writing, that other possessed people

787 /212 cont./
531 can read these messages; but we have not turned up any precise evidence on this subject (1).

1. These signs are very little systematized and have no relation whatever with the symbolic designs which figure in certain rituals of possession, especially in Dahomey and Haiti. It is permitted to see in them a simple likeness.

787 The Papa gadu are chiefly consulted to ask them to re-
[255] veal the cause of misfortunes that happen. One of them is not
[253] asked to cure an illness unless the interrogation reveals that it brought it on.

776 The worship of the Papa gadu snake gods makes a strong
648 impression on the West Indian Creoles who maintain regular relations with the Refugee Blacks. Most consider it as diabolical
[782] in nature and disapprove of it, but if the presence of an "adder"
[171] (anaconda snake) is noted in a neighboring creek, and if at the same time misfortunes occur, it happens that a Creole may go to ask the Refugee Blacks to practice rites to mollify
[778] the vengeance of the god. We have happened to catch sight of, hidden in a copse behind the habitation of a gold miner, a small altar decorated with blue and red pennants, the usual place of worship of the Papa gadu.

755 Observation in Boniville, November, 1952.
An Asisi woman, Tini, comes to Boniville to consult
[789] her adoptive daughter Pamasa, about 35 years old, who is possessed by a Papa gadu named Adawa. Féni, 15 years old,
[164] Tini's son, has been sick for several days (fever, eruption all over the body). When someone comes to get u[illegible] the god has already entered into Pamasa, has sat down in a hut, and

/217 cont./

If someone marries a girl, he must not only pay her mother the price of virginity but must also pay the girl's akka. For that he offers white beads and cloth which the bride will wear, as well as sweets which will be consumed by her. If the price of virginity were not paid, the woman's akka, humiliated, might make her sick or kill her.

/218/ There are seven categories of akka, masculine and feminine, one for each day of the week.

Crevaux in 1877 was able to establish the complete list (1):

1. This conception is widespread in the Agni-Ashanti culture area, among the Ewé and Mina, and as far as western Dahomey. The names reported among the Mina correspond very exactly, except for some differences in pronunciation, to the ones kept by the Boni.

	Men	Women
Sunday	Kwasi	Kwasiba
Monday	Kɔdyo	Adyuba
Tuesday	Kwami	Abeniba
Wednesday	Kwaku	Akuba
Thursday	Yao	Yaba
Friday	Kɔfi	Afiba
Saturday	Kwamina	Amba

All these names are known to the Boni, but none of our informants was capable of reciting the complete list. It is well understood that a name like Kɔfi, Kɔdio /sic/, etc. is the akka's name and not at all the man's name (2).

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2. Although it happens that people receive as a name an akka name, sometimes accompanied by a qualificative, such as Lébikwaku.

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[551] Actually, each one knows his akka's name, which was revealed to him by his parents when he was a child; to this name is attached an akka kina or food prohibition relative to the akka.
[754] Both are carefully kept secret even from near relatives and friends, for knowing them could help the wisimã take possession of the akka. On this subject people often use the term gadu kina, as they say mi gadu instead of mi akka. This term is
[784] easily confused with the prohibition imposed on the possessed
[787] person by the god which incarnates itself in him; these are two very different notions.

[858] The akka kina is unique for each man. It is sought by
[787] the parents when the child is completely weaned. They try to draw parallels between the foods he has eaten and the health disorders he may exhibit, and these suppositions are confirmed by divinatory procedures.

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782 A man does not ordinarily pray to his akka. He addresses prayer to it only if he is sick, to ask it for protection, or before leaving on a long trip, to ask it to watch over him. If he comes back safe and sound, he thanks it by making an offering to it, in the form of a bottle of syrup (switi sopi), which he turns upside down over his head.

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184 According to Mr. W. F. van Lier, the Djuka have the idea that the shadow (kaaka) is the visible image of the akka; the Boni do not appear to have this conception; one does not observe that they attach any importance whatever to whether a man's shadow passes over them; on the contrary, one must not step over a man lying on the ground, that might injure his akka.

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769 778 Beside the principal fraga tiki one sometimes sees sticks bearing fragments of white cloth; they have been planted in honor of those ancestors who have demanded it.

769 778 782 The ceremonies at the fraga tiki have a very simple character; prayers are said in the ordinary language and often have the character of an intimate conversation. In the absence of the head of the lineage, an old man pronounces them; while he speaks, an assistant makes the offering of water and tafia. Pouring water on the ground is a rite having as its purpose entering into contact with the ancestors; it is seen performed in funeral ceremonies, before beginning the interrogation of the yɔrka. The tafia is an offering in the literal sense of the term; at the time of the principal prayers being addressed to the ancestors, the offering of tafia is preceded by an offering of cane [272] juice, kyẽɔ wata. Cane juice was the beverage on feast days in the times when the ancestors, at war with the Europeans, were bereft of tafia.

The prayer formulas most commonly used ask the ancestors to intercede with Masa gadu on behalf of their descendants: "Ancestors, watch over us, protect us, pray to Masa gadu for us so that...."

769 787 613 Possession by a yɔrka. It is taken for granted that the yɔrka of an ancestor can enter into a member of his matrilineage and reveal itself in the course of attacks of possession. This is a very rare phenomenon. In 1958, in all the Boni country, only about ten people were known who bore thus the yɔrka of an ancestor. These attacks come on spontaneously, no cult having their provocation as its purpose. We were present in December, 1956 at one of these attacks in a young woman from Papaïston, Mili, about 20 years old. Since the day before, the yɔrka of an ancestor of the lineage dead for two generations had manifested itself in her intermittently; these attacks lasted several minutes;

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769 778 782 her voice changed, imitating a man's; eyes staring, she appeared to have no longer any consciousness of what was around her. Then suddenly the attack would cease and she would busy herself with her household occupations in the most natural fashion. The yɔrka which was believed to become incarnate thus in Mili's body spoke of very commonplace things, repeating indefinitely sentences concerning minor happenings of the day, or asking for a small offering of tafia on its behalf at the fraga tiki. A psychiatrist would doubtless have thought of an attack of mental dissociation.

[784] These yɔrka are not feared by their involuntary bearer, since none can exercise a kunu against his own lineage; they manifest themselves only exceptionally, sometimes indicating remedies or warning of dangers. Thus it is that A... of the Dipélu II lo, who has a Kumẽnti besides, also has a yɔrka which revealed itself in him without ever having been called on. According to his comrades, this yɔrka sometimes steps in with a cavernous voice, notably in September, 1952, during a hunting expedition, where it shouted: "Let us not go that way, we shall meet a jaguar." A... lost consciousness for only a few seconds and had not been aware of anything.
/Figs. 26 and 27 appear here./ /221/

795 828 The nẽmseki (1). Each Refugee Black has a nẽmseki, that is

1. This word seems to be a deformation of English "namesake" (homonym).

to say that certain elements of his personality are thought to originate from the reincarnation of a certain ancestor. This is a very obscure conception with the Boni, and without apparent correlation with their notion of the akka and the yɔrka; they never say: "I am the reincarnation of So-and-So," but simply:

/222 cont./

114 784 The various works treating of the Refugee Blacks point out well the importance of the kunu, but it seems to us that the functioning of this institution (for in fact a social institution is certainly concerned here) has not been clearly understood.

784 613 A kunu is attached to a matrilineage in the literal sense (bɛɛ). It extends obligatorily to all the members of the matrilineage and can strike only them.

For example, my kunu can strike my sister's son but not my wife nor my children (they are subject to the kunu of their own lineage). /223/

[782] [571] The kunu, striking the lineage as a whole, can be appeased only by prayers uniting (at least in principle) the whole lineage. That is the respect in which the kunu may be defined as a social institution, for it is, we shall see, the principal cement holding the groups together.

The unleashing of a kunu does not necessarily and immediately follow the destruction of a termitary or the death of a dagowe snake. The god thus offended avenges itself by making a certain number of members of the lineage sick and 784 613 782 by causing limited misfortunes to happen. When things are at that point the kunu can still be exorcised by prayers and offerings. In 1957 the beginning of a kunu was manifesting itself thus in the Awara Bakka lineage of Asisi; very frightened, the members of the lineage made offerings and prayers to exorcise it.

784 613 [673] [761] But if the lineage people neglect the warnings of the god, if through laziness or selfishness too great a number of them are absent from the collective prayers and do not take part in the offerings, prayers and offerings will be refused and the god will kill one of them. From then on the kunu is unleashed and can no longer leave the lineage. Its involuntary bearer [428] will have to bequeath it upon his death to a member of the lineage, who cannot refuse this legacy and must immediately

/223 cont./

784 613 428 begin his instruction in order to become a suitable bearer. (If this procedure were not carried out, the god would not cease its kunu at all, and the possibility of entering into contact with it and appealing it would be lost. Besides, sooner or later it would come back into a member of the lineage.)

784 613 [602] The kunu strikes without regard to kinship ties, even if kinship between the bearer of the god and the supposed victim is very distant. Ex.: The Papa gadu of Donasi (Papaïston lo) struck a young woman, Gou, with illness in January, 1957. Donasi and Gou are only relatives in the ninth degree. The [782] [361] members of the entire Papaïston lineage assembled to supplicate the god: even people of Wétiti village in the lower Maroni came.

775 784 613 The kunu exercised by the yɔrka of a dead person has a special importance in the eyes of the Refugee Blacks, for it has profound repercussions on the relations among the lineages.

[428] In principle, the yɔrka exercising a kunu has as bearer a living member of its own lineage, who will bequeath it at his death. But it is also possible that the yɔrka may take as bearer a member of the lineage upon which it exercises the kunu.

[782] In both cases, the rite to appease the yɔrka is the same; the yɔrka can be invoked effectively only by the members of its own lineage, since one can pray (at least in principle) only to one's own maternal ancestors.

When matrilineage A is struck by the kunu exercised by a yɔrka of matrilineage B, its members thereupon go to consult the elders of matrilineage A /sic/ and ask them to try to calm [769] [778] [787] the anger of their ancestor. The members of lineage A assemble around the fraga tiki of lineage B, in back of the elders of this lineage, in the presence of the bearer of the yɔrka, who calls on his gita, goes into trances and prophesying. The yɔrka [782] usually asks for an offering of cane juice and tafia, which is made at the foot of the /224/ fraga tiki by the elders of lineage B (for the rite to be efficacious, the offering must have been furnished by lineage A).

/225 cont./

784 Having no known lineage (his family, if he had any, was
735 in Surinam), it had taken people of the Dipélu lineage as
614 bearers. The last was △ Denis † in 1938. Since Denis'
787 death, it no longer has a bearer. The questioning of the dead reveals that they died by its kunu. The members of the two
[782] fractions of the lineage meet together (at least two or three members of each village come) to supplicate it.

784 A third kunu, very interesting in origin and supposed
614 action, /226/ in 1957 was borne by Kwau (Dip. I, E1, Kotika village). It results from the killing of an anaconda snake by Apatu † (Dip. I, C1), companion of the explorer Crevaux when he was traveling to /in/ Brazil. Upon contact with Europeans Apatu had become a freethinker and was no longer
[753] observing the laws of his people. Among the later victims of
[755] this kunu was counted Kwami (Dip. II, F4, Kormotibo village) who, gravely ill, had had to go to L'Enfant Perdu where the god had been invoked for him and offerings made. The death
[761] of Manga (Dip. I, E5, [illegible]niville, † about 1930) was particularly attributed to it.

No other kunu has revealed itself in Apatu village since its founding in 1882.

784 A fourth kunu concerning all the Dipélu has as bearers
614 women of the Dipélu II group. It results from the inadvertent
776 murder of a Papa gadu whose bearer was a dagowe snake killed
787 in the course of the nivrée /fishing/ of a pool by Akonté
562 † (Dip. II, B1), transmitted to Kondo †, then to Alama (Dip. II, E1).

Since then Papa gadu have revealed themselves in ○ Apaïta (Dip. II, F9, Kormotibo village) and in ○ Kaala (Dip. II, G28, Asisi-Dip. II village). They declared themselves to be the descendants of the first and to come in support of it.

/227 cont./

784 --A second, very old kunu is exercised by a yɔrka of the
775 Dipélu II lo, Gy..., dead so long that he cannot be placed on
787 the genealogical table; it, too, had as bearer a member of the
613 lineage on which it was exercising the kunu, ○ Akumuyé
614 (Aw.B.1, D17) † 1957.

Thus the Awara Bakka and Dipélu lineages exercise the kunu reciprocally one against the other;

784 --A third kunu of recent origin is exercised by a Papa
786 gadu god which had as bearer in 1957 ○ Irma (Aw.B.1, E37).
613 It results from the inadvertent killing of a Dagowe /sic/ snake
[789] by ⚠ Takwa, Irma's brother. At the end of 1957 this kunu
[753] had yet brought on only illnesses of such a kind that people could still hope to exorcise it.

784 The Aw.B.3 group has a special kunu of its own and
613 considers itself out of reach of the kunu of the Aw.B.1.

Anèta, originating in the Djuka village of Tabiki, is subject to the kunu of that lineage as are all her descendants in
[782] uterine line. On occasion of serious illnesses the latter have sometimes had to go to Tabiki village to supplicate the kunu.

This kunu is the one of a god borne by Akanté, Anèta's
[786] daughter. In September, 1956, Summa, Akanté's daughter,
[787] was sick. The god revealed that this was its doing. It was
[782] supplicated (the other fractions joined the group) and she then got well.

613 Kunu of the Afi lineage. The descendants of Afi † (woman
621 coming from the tribe of the Bakabuchi of Surinam) live for the most part in Asisi in close symbiosis with the /228/ Awara Bakka lineage. They are in a situation analogous to that of Anèta's descendants (Aw.B.3) but, perhaps by the simple fact of their number, they form a more individualized unit.

/230 cont./

784 the lineage; questioned, this god declared that it had something
787 to complain about in the bad condition of the house which the
776 members of the lineage had erected to it on its order; the roof of leaves had not been changed and it was raining through.

784 It happens also, but as an exception, that the god has
684 sanctioned an offense against morals or more precisely, against the social law, such as the breaking of an interdiction, pikadu (incest in the wider sense, an offense against exogamy). It is necessary to understand that in the thought of the Refugee Blacks, incest unleashes the existing kunu but does not create a new kunu.

In October, 1952, Dolo, a young man of 25 of the
[787] Awara Bakka lo, died almost suddenly. Divination revealed
[761] that he had been killed by the kunu (it was a Papa gadu which
[613] had intervened) in order to sanction an offense committed some time previously by another member of the lo named P.... The latter, a notoriously depraved individual, had committed incest with his own sister.

784 When the divinity has made known through the mouth
776 of its bearer the causes of its act, the assembled members of
782 the lineage implore it, ask it not to pursue its vengeance; the
[787] divinity then requires an offering: for example, if it is a Papa gadu, it will require bottles of beer, some red and white cloth which will be immersed in a given place in the river. It may also require dances in its honor, celebrated by the other possessed people in the village. If it is an Ampuku, it will demand rum, dark-blue cloth which will be exposed in a remote place in the forest. An offering of this kind represents a relatively small sum, even for the Boni (several thousand francs in 1952). The god then declares itself appeased. But it does not pardon and it will resume /231/ its vengeance
[183] at the first cause. Thus the Boni have hope only in a rigorous
776 observance of customary law and the rites. There are divinities
787 which appeared to be thus appeased for a long time and to

/232 cont./

787 In a general way, they consider that the bearer of a god
784 exercising the kunu has nothing to fear from it personally if he
776 rigorously observes the kina which have been imposed upon
him. On the other hand, this god will punish any injury to
[562] its bearer. Thus these bearers (almost always old women) live
[888] surrounded by respect and fear.

784 /233/ Observations in January, 1958 (misfortunes attributed to
769 vengeance of ancestors on their own lineage).
613 Do (Lapé) is taken ill on January 7, 1958 with a violent
75 attack of dysentery. The same day his five-year-old son is
grievously hurt at the wharf by falling on a broken bottle.
[787] Alarmed by this coincidence, the members of the Lapé lo
assemble and proceed to question a possessed person. The latter
reveals that it is the doing of an old woman of the lineage,
Atala, dead for two years. Several lineage members have al-
ready been sick from this; the dead woman wanted to sanction
offenses committed by the people of the lineage.

The same day in Boniville, Klémenti (Dju), to whom I
am recounting this affair, tells me that before the lifting of
mourning for his mother Béniti, he and his sisters were sick.
[787] Divination showed that it was the doing of Béniti, who wished
to hasten the celebration of the ceremony.

784 The kunu and social peace among the Boni. Role of the grand
775 man. The kunu exercised by a yɔrka creates very strange re-
613 lations among the Boni lineages. As blind and arbitrary as the
571 vengeance attributed to the yɔrka may be, the Boni have the
sense of the legal unity of the lineage too much for any resent-
ment to exist: "They are killing our family..."; and yet the
two lineages find themselves henceforth irreparably bound to-
[782] gether. The victims of the kunu can no longer get along without
people of the lineage of the yɔrka which pursues them with its
vengeance, since they alone, by their prayers, can appease
temporarily the anger of their ancestor. One conceives of the

845 /257/
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751 This worship is celebrated each time there is occasion to protect newborn babies. They are washed with a certain decoction of leaves.

845 Every four or five years on the average a big dance takes
535 place, then the father and mother of twins and the twins
751 themselves are washed in order to maintain their powers and keep them in good health.

[784] If these dances are not held, dead twins will show their
[753] anger by making living twins and parents of twins sick.

845 Lineages that do not have twins do not practice these
613 rites. If twins are born to them, they will apply at the place
778 of worship of another lineage.

Papaïston and Lapé have this cult particularly highly developed.

842 Tɔne pikin. It is assumed that a woman may be made pregnant
776 by a river god, either a Papa gadu snake god or by the Wata Iɔgi, which look like Indians. Children thus conceived are called tɔne pikin.

A..., of Papaïston, had cut a clearing opposite a remarkable white rock called Weti stɜ. where she used to moor her boat. She had not had any children for several years
[787] and she became pregnant. When her daughter was born a
[778] possessed person revealed that she was born of a Papa gadu
[782] snake god which lived there: since then her parents /relatives/ go regularly to this rock to make offerings.

About 1910 Alama (Kormotibo) had followed her husband to a shipyard on the lower river; one day while walking in the forest she met an Indian having the appearance of a Galibi Indian, who was carrying a newborn baby. She stopped and admired the baby. The Indian said to her: "Do you wish to raise him?" She acquiesced. He said: "We shall see each other again"; then he went away so quickly that she had the impression that he had disappeared on the spot.

/258 cont./

776 823 778 One of the best known of these gods is that of the Maruini. It is assumed to control all the tributaries of the Maruini as far as their sources. Its place of worship is a thicket situated downstream from the dangerous Kubi Sula Falls, at the mouth of the river. Before starting to go upriver in August, 1956, the crews of our three boats, in an atmosphere of great meditation, lined up behind the eldest of them, who made the offering of water and tafia, uttering these words: "God who commands this river, watch over us, keep us from being sick, let no accident happen to us; if there is on this river an interdiction which we do not know (2) and which, through

782 [539]

2. It is obvious here that this is a case of de facto worship of a divinity about which nothing is known.

ignorance, we do not observe, pardon us. Bring us back to our villages safe and sound." The boatmen came one after the other to make the offering of tafia. The scene lasted more than a quarter of an hour. This ceremony was not without nobility, engendering belief in that sincere fervor of animists so often mentioned in the /259/ ethnographic literature.

771 But our return at the end of our work trip took place in a completely different atmosphere, showing the strictly practical and utilitarian side of the religion of the Refugee Blacks. Once past the Kubi Sula, the three boss boatmen could not persuade any of their men, who were in the act of eating their meal, to accompany them as far as the place of worship to thank the god. Some told us straight out that they were scoffing at this god from now on, having no intention of coming back on the Maruini. As for the boss boatmen themselves, they measured stingily the quantity of tafia offered

[782]

/259 cont./

to the god, and their words of thanks lasted scarcely half a minute (1). At the time of our first trip on the Maruini, in

1. Yet custom expressly provides for this rite of thanking.

1948, the same scenes had unfolded, going as well as coming back.

Rites Relative to Agriculture

These rites occupy a relatively minor place in the religious life of the Refugee Blacks, which may be attributed to the great regularity of the climate and the absence of calamities affecting the yield of crops.

It does not seem, at least among the Boni, that a religious bond is assumed between the lineage and the land, and rites intended to insure the fertility of the soil are carried out by each one for himself in the neighborhood of his own field; the lineage head does not appear to play any particular role in this regard. In the thought of the Boni, the fertility of the soil depends upon a local divinity, to which is offered de facto worship; the temporary or permanent users of the lands situated in the domain of this god perform on their own behalf the rites of this worship without any distinction of origin, whether they are Boni, Djuka, or Saramaka.

The only collective worship existing in Boni country is the worship of mama [illegible], of which the grand man is priest. Its rites are limited to a short annual prayer.

241 /259 cont./
776 Cult of Mama gɔ̃. Mama gɔ̃, mother of the earth, is repre-
[532] sented by a crude statue of white clay provided with enormous
831 breasts, symbol of fecundity, which can be seen in a little
778 hut situated on the open place of Boniville village. Each
643 year, when the time for cutting the clearings approaches, the
[782] grand man, surrounded by many other people, prays to the
god to grant fertility to the plantings. If rain does not fall,
an offering of water and tafia is made and the statue is sprinkled.

811 The Boni do not appear to associate the idea of women's
fecundity with that of the fertility of the soil, and we have
not heard anyone say that the grand man prays on this subject.

241 Neither do they appear to have a very clear idea about
776 the relationships of this worship with that of the gɔ̃ gadu,
local gods of the soil.

796 Every three years a great possession dance takes place
535 in Boniville on January 1, /260/ in which the Papa gadu gods
787 dance in front of the sanctuary of Mama gɔ̃. We have not
been able to obtain specific information on the meaning of
this rite.

241 Cult of the gɔ̃ gadu. It is assumed that every portion of land
776 is under the sway of a local god, gɔ̃ gadu. Its power is
[784] limited only by the fertility of the soil, and he who neglects
its worship cannot be attacked in his person or in his goods,
but only punished by a poor harvest.

What is the nature of these gods, what is their place in
the cosmogony? These are questions which not one of our
informants had ever asked himself. In their minds, gɔ̃ gadu
has a de facto existence, and is rendered de facto worship.
This worship consists essentially of:

[782] --Offerings made at the moment of planting;
[527] --The observance of a local day of rest, kina dɛ, corresponding to the god's day of rest.

/260 cont./

241 778 People who have no farming habitation and who farm on the outskirts of /Fig. 29 appears here/ /261/ residence villages get together in groups of three or four to establish a worship place in a copse preserved from the forest adjoining their clearings.

241 782 Cane juice, syrup, rice pounded fine but not cooked are offered.

They make this offering at the time of the plantings, saying, "Gadu, please come and eat a little, watch over us, thank you very much."

The Boni who observe the rites most faithfully renew this offering each month at the new moon.

If someone has two clearings in two different sectors, he performs the rites twice, each gods gadu being entirely independent of the others.

241 171 On this subject one notices that the beliefs of the Refugee Blacks are much more systematized than those of the Creole populations of African origin in the West Indies. They do not think each field has an individual soul; neither do they apparently believe in the possibility of capturing the soul of the field in order to make the neighbor's field sterile out of revenge. These beliefs, which play such a large role in the popular magic of the West Indies, seem to be without exact counterpart in the beliefs of the Refugee Blacks.

241 [176] Interdictions and various rites. Cutting a clearing involves great dangers: it is necessary to avoid injuring the maleficent divinities of the bush, which have as supports well-defined plants and animals, by brutal destruction of these supports, and their wreaking inexorable revenge -- the kunu -- on the lineage of the unintentional sacrilege. It is therefore necessary to seek out these plants and animals and to carry out for each the rites recommended by the ancestors' experience without forgetting a single one. No Refugee Black would dream of

/262 cont./

824 778 door; it was a particularly feared kɛ̃ndu that no thief would have dared to remove.

825 778 [776] --The Kɛ̃ntamasu are the divinities, especially maleficent and hostile to men, who live in the termitaries (these are termites proper, who make their nest in the earth, and not wood lice, much more common). There is one to each termitary.

[789] After a meticulous examination of the soil of the clearing, one marks all the termitaries /263/ and sprinkles each of them with a preparation containing leaves, pink clay kukusa, and manioc juice. One adjures the genie to go away, no matter where.

It happens that in spite of all the precautions taken a [787] [784] termitary is forgotten. Then, several days later, one will have the consternation of seeing the Kɛ̃ntamasu reveal itself in someone of the lineage; it announces that it is going to exercise its kunu (curse). It is temporarily appeased by offer- [782] ings of tafia, various drinks, red cloth.

796 198 787 The Kɛ̃ntamasu call themselves the Akɔlo. Through the mouth of their bearers they speak a language nobody understands. However, when they wish to be understood by those present they speak Kumɛ̃nti.

755 784 Observation in Boniville, January, 1957:

A..., boatman of the border-fixing mission, asks for three days off. His wife, Masauman, has been ill for several days; divination (in this particular case the gita of a female relative in his lineage) showed that it was the doing of a Kɛ̃ntamasu injured in the burning of the clearing which he himself, A..., cut for his wife in October. The Kɛ̃ntamasu has not yet manifested itself directly, but a kunu threatens; to appease it he must put in action the remedy known only 000 to M..., an old man of Asisi. He will go to the spot, following

765 /263 cont./ He will go to the spot, following
• 782 at a good distance M.... bearer of the remedy, with which he will sprinkle the surface of the clearing, and of offering objects. When the offering has been made, they will wait some time to see whether Masauman is better and if she is, they will deem the god appeased.

796 The Yali Festival

[805] The Refugee Blacks, who do not count the days that elapse, contenting themselves with lunations in order to follow the course of the year, make inquiries from Europeans and Creoles to set the time for the Yali festival which marks the new year. Everyone accumulates provisions, especially tortoise meat, varied drinks, and many firecrackers.

On the evening of December 31 each one dances in his own village.

The festival lasts all night, tafia gushes forth, firecrackers go off everywhere.

[787] At the end of the night several gods "rise" in the heads of their bearers, at least of those who are not completely drunk.

[535] During the day dances resume intermittently in the order awasa, sɔŋgɛ, susa. It is customary for the people of one lineage to go to dance in the village of another, then they [574] invite them back. People make many individual visits. Some have set up in front of their hut a sort of small buffet on which they have arranged about ten glasses, five to six liters of tafia, four or five bottles of beer, lemonade, and syrup.

Observation in Boniville, January 1, 1958:

The grand man, who scarcely leaves his habitation downstream from Boniville any more, did not /264/ put himself out. He delegated his functions to Lébiman and Fintiman, men about 50 years old, belonging to the fraction of the Kotika and Dju lineages residing in Boniville.

/265 cont./

796 769 539 "Great ancestors who are in God's country, it is you who have the strength of the village."

(The tafia gushes forth.)

"Drink, drink, but do not get drunk to the point of being deluded, look with favor upon the righteous, scatter the wicked."

796 782 Next, Fintiman goes off to make an offering of tafia accompanied by a few words at the chapel of Odun. Then he goes to the edge of the mortuary shed to pour water, tafia, and coffee on behalf of Samalobi, the grand man's brother, for whom mourning has not been lifted.

He goes next to the house of the deceased grand man Awensay to make an offering of coffee (Awensay, like the other grand men, used to drink coffee).

796 782 829 The prayer of the preceding year (January 1, 1957), presided over by grandfather Samalobi, had had a higher inspiration. After praying in about the same terms as above for the Boni, they prayed for the Djuka, explaining that in days gone by Boni and Djuka had fought, but that all that was forgotten. They prayed next for the Saramaka, then for the Indians, finally for the Europeans. I asked why; they answered: "It is because the Europeans were the ones who brought us to this country which has become ours." /p. 266 is blank/

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CHAPTER VIII

538 765

TALES -- PROVERBS

Tales (Anɛ̃si tɔli) and Proverbs (ɔdo) retain an important social function among the Refugee Blacks. It is always by tales that the great customary ceremonies of the lifting of mourning begin. Their function is to concentrate the attention of the